A

DEFENCE

Of the PRINCIPLES of the

Westminster-Confession of Faith,

And the PROCEEDINGS of the Reverend GENERAL SYNOD of *Ulster*, held at *Dungannon*, *June* 19——22, 1739, against the Groundless ASPERSIONS of Mr. *RICHARD APRICHARD*.

In Two PARTS.

I. An ANSWER to his SCRUPLES and REASONS supporting them against Subscribing said Confession.

By the Revd. Mr. *Tho. Kennedy*,
Member of the GENERAL SYNOD.

PRESBYTERIAN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY.

PART II.

REMARKS on his NARRATIVE of the PROCEEDINGS of said SYNOD, in relation to HIM and his SCRUPLES.

By *WILLIAM DICK*, M. A.
Member of the General Synod.

JAMES iii. 17. —— *The Wisdom that is from above, is first Pure, then Peaceable.*

JOHN Ep. ii. 10, 11. *If there come any unto you, and bring not this Doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed. for he that biddeth him God speed, is partaker of his evil deeds.*

BELFAST:
Printed by SAMUEL WILSON and JAMES MAGEE.
M, DCC, XL.

A

THE PREFACE.

THO' *possibly some may suppose, that Mr.* Ap-d's *attempt against our Principles and Constitution were better Answered with disregard, yet, 'tis hoped, that his Publishing to the World his Exceptions against our Principles, and an unfair Narrative of our Proceedings with respect to them, in the last General Synod, will, with most People, abundantly justify the Publication of some Remarks on both.*

NOTHING less than the necessary Defence of our Religion and Reputation, which were loaded with Reproach, would have determin'd us, in the present situation of Publick Affairs, when War has been Proclaimed, to follow our Adversaries to the Press; who have first and last been the Aggressors. And if we had said nothing now, 'tis likely many would conclude, we had nothing to say; tho' without Reason, while Mr. Gilb. Kennedy's *two Pieces in Defence of Subscription, remain unanswered.*

'TIS confessed with Pleasure, that great Numbers of our Body need not our Assistance to shew them the Fallacy of Mr. Ap-d's *Reasoning. But still it must be owned, that others do: and for their Help these Sheets are chiefly designed. If any of the former Rank say, they are sorry to see the Cause of Religion no better Defended; they must not take it amiss to be told, the Blame of that belongs to themselves; because that none of them would take the trouble of appear-*

ing

ing in Defence of it. In this Case, I mean the Remarks on the Narrative, it happen'd, as in many others, the weakest was obliged to go to the Wall, and the Nobles put not their necks to the work.

WE have study'd to offer nothing to Publick View that can give just Offence to any, (unless fair Reasoning may be taken for such) and therefore the indecent Behaviour of some of Mr. Ap-d's *Friends in the Synod, which was offensive to Members and Spectators, and many Scurrilous things in his Printed Narrative, are either past over without Notice, or not so severely animadverted upon as they deserve. These things sufficiently Expose themselves, in the View of all rightly disposed Minds; and serve but to shew the Strength of their Passions, and the Weakness of their Cause, that take them into their Assistance. We would contend with Reasons not Reproaches.*

IF Mr. Ap-d, *or any for him, shall think it worth while to Publish any thing by Way of Reply to this Defence, let them treat us and the Argument, as may consist with Christianity and Common Decency, and as becomes them to Treat Ministers of Christ and Gentlemen. Which if they do, what they Offer shall be Fairly and Impartially Examined, if it shall please God to give us Life and Health. But if they Strive to run us down, with Scurrilous Invectives or Nameless Lampoons, we will take no farther Notice of it than as a Confession from them, that our Cause has the better in Point of Reason, and therefore they betake themselves to Reproach and Ridicule.*

AN

AN

ANSWER

TO

Mr. RICHARD APRICHARD'S

SCRUPLES, &c.

THE First SCRUPLE is founded upon chap. xxth, paragraph 4th,—"And "for their publishing of such opini- "ons,—as are contrary to the light of "nature, or to the known principles "of Christianity,—they may lawful- "ly be called to account, and proceed- "ed against,——by the power of the civil magistrate." And also upon chap. xxiii. para. 3d. "The civil magi- "strate—hath authority, and it is his duty, to take or- "der, that unity—be preserved in the Church, that— "all corruptions and abuses, in worship and discipline, "be prevented or reformed, and all the ordinances of "GOD duly settled, administred, and observed; f

" the better effecting whereof, he hath power to call " Synods, to be present at them, and to provide that " whatsoever is transacted in them, be according to the " mind of GOD". These I cannot subscribe, for the " following Reasons.

ANSWER, BEFORE we consider the Reasons intended to support this Scruple, we shall premise some observations necessary for understanding the genuine sense of the articles scrupled.

OBSERV. I. THAT as the Confession doth not determine the precise extent of the magistrate's power, we are not farther concerned in its defence, than what said Confession treats of; and whereas christian liberty, the subject of chap. xxth, hath been grossly abused, to serve the cause of libertinism, it was necessary to point out the proper restraints thereof, which only can be ordered by the powers ordained of GOD; that every man might not be left to do *what is right in his own eyes*, and with *Micah*, *Judg.* xvii. 5, 6. set up his house of gods; when there was no King in *Israel* to restrain him.

OBSER. II. WE are very sensible, that the many different opinions, about Religious Matters, which prevail in the world, make it difficult with some to allow the magistrate any power at all in these things; in regard, every denomination in power is apt to bear down the weakest, and think that hereby they do God service. This being foretold, *John* xvi. 2. we should not be surprized, when it comes to pass. Now in such a state of division, it's the excellency of our Confession of Faith, that it hath not made every man's private judgment, the moral frame, the light within, or any other name or thing the caprice of men may invent, the rule to distinguish between truth and error, right and wrong, duty and sin, but, with all true Protestants, confineth this prerogative to the inspired writings of the old and

new

new Teſtament. If therefore the migiſtrate takes not the holy Scriptures for his rule, as far as concerneth himſelf in matters of religion, but follows his erroneous private judgment, perſecution even to the godly, muſt be the fruit of his adminiſtration: And truely this has been the teeming ſource of all the perſecutions which have oppreſſed the chriſtian church.

OBSER. III. The articles ſcrupled, do not ſpecify any kind, or degree of puniſhments, to be inflicted by the civil Magiſtrate upon blaſphemers and obſtinate ſpreaders of errors; ſo that if the chriſtian Magiſtrate may put ſuch perſons under any reſtraints, conſiſtently with the genius of the goſpel, (and it will be hard to prove that he may not) then the doctrine of our Confeſſion is the more defenſible. But if any magiſtrate have exceeded the juſt limits of his power, preſcribed by the laws of God, humanity, and chriſtian meekneſs; or if any church officers have prompted him thereunto, this can be no argument againſt the right exerciſe of his power, in reſtraining the abuſes of chriſtian liberty.

OBSER. IV. There are no particular errors ſpecified in the Confeſſion, to be proſecuted by the civil magiſtrate. If he therefore, puts forth his power againſt truth inſtead of error, this muſt be owing to his private judgment; which by ſome is ſet up for his ſupreme rule. However, it's to be obſerved, that in theſe paragraphs referred unto, a ſpecial reſpect is had unto the ſpreading and publiſhing of errors, to the deſtruction of the peace of the Church. So that it is falſe to alledge, that a power is given to the magiſtrate to puniſh men, meerly for their opinions. Having premiſed theſe things, we proceed to conſider the Reaſons advanced in defence of this ſcruple.

Reaſon 1. "If the preſervation and advancement "of mens civil intereſts, is the ſole end of civil ſociety, "and if the ſole end of magiſtracy, is the preſervation "and ſupport of that ſociety, then the end of ſociety

" must be the end of magiſtracy; nor can this extend
" any farther than the civil intereſts of the other. Ma-
" giſtrates therefore, as ſuch, have no concern with
" matters purely religious; their power they receive
" from the ſociety only. But no member of a ſociety
" can alienate his religious rights, becauſe religion is
" ſtrictly a perſonal thing; no magiſtrate therefore can
" have any authority to judge for others in religion, nor
" to puniſh for opinions purely ſuch.

ANSW. If the preſervation and advancement of mens civil intereſts, be the ſole end of civil ſociety, then that ſociety, though of rational creatures, muſt, as they are aſſociated, have no more regard to God Almighty than is to be had in the herding together of brutes; though they know their preſervation and advancement is from him alone. Where is it allowed, or what reaſon can be given to ſeparate mens civil and religious rights, that they ſhould have no neceſſary connection with one another? We ought to ſay in advancing our civil intereſt, " If the Lord will, we ſhall live and do " this or that." For, " unleſs the Lord keep the City the watchmen watch in vain". It's likewiſe as abſurd to ſay, that the ſole end of magiſtracy is the perſervation and ſupport of civil ſociety. If magiſtracy be God's ordinance, God muſt be glorified thereby; and how can this be, if the magiſtrate is not as ſuch, to take care for religion? When king *David* ſought the good of *Jeruſalem*, he ſays, *Pſal.* cxxii. 9. it was *becauſe of the houſe of the Lord our God*. When God promiſeth that kings and queens, ſhall be nurſing fathers and mothers to his church, *Iſa.* xlix. 23. is this to be underſtood that they are to have no concernment in matters of Religion? What was the ground of God's controverſy, with the wicked kings of *Iſrael* and *Judah*, but becauſe they reſtrained not idolaters and falſe prophets according to his command? *Deut.* xiii. 5,—12. and though chriſtian kingdoms cannot adopt ſome of the moſaic

moſaic laws, as the *Jews* were under a theocracy, yet as far as there was a moral reaſon for the magiſtrate's exerciſing this power, the ſame muſt equally conclude now as well as then.

It's ſaid that religion is a perſonal thing, which no member of a ſociety can alienate, and ſo no magiſtrate can judge for another in matters of religion. Anſwer, It's a publick as well as a perſonal thing; it's only perſonal as he is the ſubject of it, tho' every believer muſt have faith, which may be called his faith, yet the Apoſtle calls it, the common faith: and therefore the member of a ſociety, ought not to think, he is to loſe his perſonal right by being a member of any ſociety, for bringing this along with him, it's made the right of the whole ſociety, which all in their ſtations are obliged to promote. Moreover true religion is a perſonal thing, and every member has a right to maintain it, againſt the ſociety he is in, and every power on earth, which may rob him of it; but a falſe religion or error is no man's perſonal right. But then, who ſhall be judge of that? every man, ſay they. This is the ſpring of all our preſent follies. It is not private judgment, but God's own word, that is the ſupreme rule. Here only, we muſt believe true religion is diſcovered. But more of this hereafter.

But perhaps great ſtreſs is laid on the metaphyſical diſtinction (as ſuch) that is the civil magiſtrate as ſuch, hath no concernment with religion as ſuch. And indeed conſidering the magiſtrate's power abſtractly from all matters of religion, there can be nothing of religion in this abſtract idea of the magiſtrate's power, which is nothing but begging the queſtion, which is not, what is the magiſtrate's power thus abſtractly conſidered? But what is his power, as he is in fact both a chriſtian and a magiſtrate? A ſervant of Chriſt, and a ruler over men? That when he is doing the duty of his particular calling as a magiſtrate, he ought not to lay aſide a juſt regard to the duties of his general calling, as a chriſtian,

but

but make the former ſubſervient to the latter: And as he received his promotion from God, by the people, he muſt uſe his power for his glory, and their good. And how can this be, if he has no concernment in matters of religion? In this caſe *Gallio* muſt be a perfect pattern for the chriſtian magiſtrate, who cared for none of theſe things. It is farther to be obſerved, that the articles of natural religion, that concern the being and attributes of God, are generally acknowledged to be neceſſary for the ſupport of civil government, in all civilized parts of the world: And at the ſame time it is univerſally owned among chriſtians, that the chriſtian revelation is in a high degree neceſſary, in the preſent degenerate ſtate of humane nature, to ſupport the principles of natural religion, and to render them effectual towards all the important ends thereof: So that by an evident conſequence, the important principles of revealed, as well as natural religion, muſt be highly neceſſary to advance the intereſts of civil ſociety, and the well being of civil government among thoſe of the chriſtian denomination

Reaſon 2d. "If Chriſt's kingdom is of a ſpiritual na-
" ture, and if it be not to be ſupported and advanced
" in the ſame manner, as the kingdoms of this world are,
" then we may juſtly infer, that temporal puniſhments
" inflicted by the civil magiſtrate, are not proper to
" ſupport the laws of this kingdom".

ANSW. If this argument proves any thing, it proves too much, and ſtrongly ſupports the doctrine of paſſive obedience; the kingdoms of this world are ſupported and defended by the ſword, therefore we muſt not uſe it, in the ſupport and defence of religion, againſt ſuch as wou'd robb us of it, but tamely ſubmit. I think this is a juſt conſequence notwithſtanding what is offered in the Narrative page 26, 27. for our chriſtian religion is Chriſt's ſpiritual kingdom; which we are to ſupport and defend, even with the loſs of our lives. Nei-

ther

ther ought we to conclude from thence, that profane ſwearers or others who break God's laws, are not to be puniſhed by the magiſtrate. Are not many Hereticks open blaſphemers, and as ſuch are they not to be puniſhed? Certainly it muſt be allowed, that if any perſon deprive me of my religious rights, upon my application to the civil magiſtrate, he may puniſh the perſon who hath thus injured me: and if my religion be Chriſt's religion, does he not thus ſupport Chriſt's kingdom by temporal puniſhments? And does he not concern himſelf then in matters of religion by ſo doing? The plain meaning of all this reaſoning of his is, that the magiſtrate ought to defend me, let my religion be true or falſe, in my profeſſion of it, and in ſpreading the groſſeſt errors, but never to puniſh me for ſuch blaſphemous errors as I publiſh, to corrupt mankind, and deſtroy the peace of the Church of God. All this is contrived as the only ſtop which can be put to perſecution: yet I think the ſtrength of this argument is taken away, by allowing that the magiſtrate ought to be inveſted with a power to ſuppreſs blaſphemies and errors ſubverſive of the rights of religious and civil ſocieties, which is one of Mr. *Apri-chard*'s declarations.

INDEED if he mean no more by this reaſoning, but that temporal puniſhments are not proper means to tranſlate a perſon from Satan's kingdom to Chriſt's, and to enlighten his underſtanding; we are perfectly agreed; but that they are not in ſome caſes a proper means to reſtrain men from doing what they can to ruin and deſtroy it, by ſpreading the poyſon of hereſie, we cannot underſtand. It's nothing to the purpoſe to ſay, that the magiſtrate executes not the laws of God, but human laws only, which are the meaſures of his government; for that is not the preſent caſe, but what is his duty in the ſight of God, ſuppoſing him enabled by ſuitable human laws to do it? Sometimes human laws may be contrary to the laws of God, ſometimes

they

they may come ſhort of what the laws of God require, the magiſtrate muſt firſt learn what is his duty by the laws of God, and never execute any human law which is contrary to it. Confeſſions of Faith ſpeak not of the duties of magiſtrates, as meaſured by the laws of men, but of God.

Reaſon 3d. "If Chriſt is ſole king of his ſpiritual "kingdom, he alone has a right to make laws to all his "ſubjects, and to him alone, are his ſubjects account-"able; the conſequence of which is, that he alone hath "a right to puniſh them for errors in religion: For if "they are accountable to the civil magiſtrate, for their "religious ſentiments, and may be proceeded againſt by "him, then Chriſt is not ſole king".

ANSW. The Confeſſion of Faith aſſerts not that men are accountable to the civil magiſtrate, merely for their erroneous ſentiments in religion, but for their publiſhing them ſo as to deſtroy the peace of the Church. It's not meerly for their ſinning againſt God, but for their being hurtful to the ſouls of men. However, the queſtion is not here, about the ſubjects of Chriſt's kingdom, but about his enemies, blaſphemers and hereticks, who deny allegiance to him, whatever they may profeſs, and to whom he will profeſs he never knew them. Do's Chriſt put them by any grant on equal footing with his real ſubjects? And why did he not ſo under the moſaic œconemy in which he commanded ſuch to be ſtoned? Or does any temporal puniſhments when inflicted, ſuperſede Chriſt's puniſhing when he ſhall appear as ſovereign judge of the world?

Reaſon 4th. "If the Magiſtrate hath authority to "ſuppreſs errors, he hath alſo authority, to uſe ſuch "force as may be ſufficient for that end. If therefore "a lower degree of puniſhment will not enlighten the "erroneous perſons underſtanding, or his conſcience "will not allow him to recede from his errors, a high-"er degree muſt be uſed. And if he ſtill perſiſts in his

"opinion,

" opinion, the higheſt muſt be inflicted, though it " ſhould reach to the taking away of his life. Sup- " poſe his error to be in the loweſt claſs of hurt- " ful opinions, he muſt be treated in the ſame manner; " that is, with as great ſeverity, as he that maintaineth " the moſt pernicious and heretical principles. From " whence the exorbitancy and unreaſonableneſs of ſuch " power in Magiſtrates appears."

ANSW. One would think this gentleman had been reading the hiſtory of the Inquiſition, inſtead of the confeſſion of faith, when he formed this Argument. Does the Confeſſion allow the Magiſtrate to uſe corporal puniſhments, to enlighten the mind of an erroneous perſon? Suppreſſing error is only to hinder the ſpreading of it, not to enlighten the mind; no, there is not the leaſt foundation for that in the whole Book. Such reaſoning as this looks not like a conſcientious ſcrupler; and ſeems to be deſigned for nothing elſe but to create an averſion to the *Weſtminſter* confeſſion in the minds of the people.

Reaſon 5th. " It will be allowed, I preſume, that every " man hath a right to private judgment, in matters " of Religion. Is it not then reaſonable to conclude, " that the Magiſtrate hath no right to puniſh men for " opinions, that do not affect the ſtate? If the Magiſ- " trate may puniſh, he muſt alſo be allowed to judge; " for a power to puniſh, without a liberty of judg- " ing what he is to puniſh, is a power to do he knows " not what: that is, no power at all. But if he hath " a right to judge for others, they have no right to " judge for themſelves. A power therefore in Magi- " ſtrates to puniſh for opinions purely religious, is de- " ſtructive of our rights as men, and conſequently un- " reaſonable."

ANSW. We allow to every man a right to private judgment, while he continues in the right Exerciſe of his reaſon, and hath not loſt it; as often it hap-

pens, by madneſs and infatuation. When ſuch caſes fall out with men, they are to be under reſtraint; otherwiſe they wou'd ſoon ruine themſelves, and be hurtful to others. We find the Lord himſelf, when nothing wou'd ſtop *Balaam* in his error, opened the mouth of the aſs, and made him ſpeak with man's voice, to reprove the madneſs of the prophet. From whence we may learn a very profitable inſtruction; *viz.* That the moſt contemptible animal, when his mouth is under divine conduct, and guided by the will of God, will ſpeak more wiſely, than the moſt admired and celebrated prophet, when he follows the dictates of his own erroneous judgment and corrupt heart: which was the caſe of *Balaam*, who, as the apoſtle teſtifies, ran greedily after error, *Jud.* ver. 11.

But though we allow to every man the right of private judgment, we cannot allow this to be his ſupreme rule in his lapſed ſtate. No man's judgment can be infallible, which is the eſſential property of a rule. The Papiſts were ſenſible of this, and therefore have aſcribed infallibility to the Pope, and ſometimes to the Church, as it ſerves their turn. All true Proteſtants have profeſſed, that the ſpirit of God ſpeaking in the ſcriptures is the ſupreme judge: and to make private judgment that, in which Chriſtians and men are to reſt, is to put truth and error on an equal footing; ſo that one man hath as good a right to be perſuaded of an error, as another hath to believe the truth of God. This is the very foundation of ſcepticiſm; and a jeſuitical contrivance to crumble the proteſtant churches into as many parties as perſons; and then where is the common faith? Now as to the civil Magiſtrate, he hath a right to judge for himſelf, according to the word of God, how far he is to execute the laws of the ſociety, Commonwealth or Kingdom, wherein he is a Magiſtrate. The perſon's judgment that he is to puniſh is not to be a rule to him, in executing

ing the law; farther than as he may receive information from it. But by this gentleman's reaſoning, it wou'd appear, that the Magiſtrate is bound up from puniſhing any criminal at all, leſt thereby he take upon him to judge for another.

'*Reaſon* 6th, PUNISHING men for following the dictates of their own conſciences, where civil ſociety is not injured thereby, is contrary to the genius of the goſpel; which breaths nothing but meekneſs and gentleneſs: It was not propagated by other force, than that of perſwaſion, nor did Chriſt ever give directions, that it ſhould be ſo, in after ages, when the Powers of this world ſhould acknowledge ſubjection to his kingdom."

ANSW. It's true the goſpel breaths nothing but gentleneſs to penitent ſinners, but if it be mean't, as it muſt be, if any thing to the purpoſe, that it breaths nothing but meekneſs and gentleneſs to bleſphemers and hereticks, and allows them an unbounded liberty to poyſon his church, without reſtraint; there can be nothing more falſe and abſurd. This were to make Chriſt the miniſter, and his goſpel a miniſtration of ſin. If we read the inſpired hiſtory of thoſe celebrated kings of *Judah*, we may find them animated with a zeal for the purity of religion? and what was morally good in their conduct, muſt be equally ſo in the conduct of chriſtian Magiſtrates. Unleſs, with blaſpheming *Morgan*, we attribute what they did to prieſt-craft.

MOREOVER let us ſeriouſly conſider, that there is a wide difference between propagating the goſpel by force of Arms, and reſtraining blaſphemers and Hereticks; who corrupt the Church of God. Theſe muſt not be reſtrained, according to our modern doctrine, for this is perſecution, if the heretick pretends conſcience, as the worſt of them have done.

Reaſon 7th, 'GRANTING a power to the civil Magiſtrate to uſe force in matters of religion, tends to ex-

'pose christians to continual violences; for as every 'denomination of christians think themselves orthodox, 'the Magistrate must think himself obliged to per-'secute, and destroy all who differ from him: by which 'means the world would become a theatre of Blood and 'confusion: and perhaps not the greatest heretick, 'but the weakest party, though the best christians, 'would suffer most".

ANSW. THOSE tragical things which this Scrupler delights to dwell upon, being the abuses of the Magistrate's power, ought not to be taken into this argument. Such things can proceed only from a blind and corrupt private judgment: And none can be obliged to account for them, but such as make private judgment the supreme rule of their conduct. But if magistrates make the laws of God the men of their council, there can be no such fruits attending their administrations.

WE shall not trouble the reader farther, upon this subject, but only take leave to observe, that few men of true learning since our happy reformation, have maintained such principles. Those who first gave rise to them were the *Anabaptists* in *Germany*; and after them they were embraced by the *Dutch Arminians*, and some *English Sectarians*, from whom they are now handed down to us. And it is more than probable, that the hands of artful *Jesuites* are at work; for it seems to have a plain tendency to weaken Protestants, and to introduce their darling, the *Pretender*. For one would think, if the Magistrate has no concernment with the religion of the subject, but allows, and protects equally *Papists*, *Deists*, *Socinians* and *Arians*, with those who are most orthodox Christians; it must then follow, that the subjects have as little concernment with the religion of the Magistrate: but must equally receive and subject themselves to him, though he be a *Papist*, *&c.* but I proceed to consider his

2d *Scruple*, FOUNDED on Chap. 10. Par. 4. "Much

less

" leſs can men, not profeſſing the Chriſtian Religion, be " ſaved in any other way whatſoever, be they never ſo " diligent to frame their lives, according to the light of " nature, and the law of that Religion they profeſs; and " to aſſert and maintain that they may, is very pernicious " and to be deteſted. In this paragraph is aſſerted the " abſolute impoſſibility of the ſalvation of the heathen " world, how agreeably ſoever they may live to the light " and advantages they enjoy. This Doctrine I cannot " ſubſcribe for the following reaſons.

ANSW. BEFORE we conſider the reaſons advanced in ſupport of this ſcruple, let it be obſerved, that we flatly deny what Mr. *Aprichard* aſſerts. The confeſſion aſſerts, that men not profeſſing the chriſtian religion, cannot be ſaved, in any other way, than by coming to Chriſt. Mr. *Aprichard* ſaith, it aſſerts the abſolute impoſſibility of their ſalvation, or that they cannot be ſaved at all. To affirm, that the abſolute impoſſibility of the ſalvation of the Heathen world, is aſſerted in this, or any other paragraph, of our confeſſion or catechiſms, is ſuch a manifeſt untruth, and ſo black a piece of calumny, as he and his friends ought to be aſhamed of. And we farther ſay, that no ſuch poſition can be inferred from any part of our confeſſion or catechiſms, by juſt conſequence. All that can be infer'd by fair reaſoning, is, that the light of nature, and the laws of any falſe religion, are inſufficient for the ſalvation of ſinful man; and that the Goſpel Revelation, and the miniſtry of the word, are the only means whereby men muſt expect to be ſaved. And that this is the ſenſe of our confeſſion and catechiſms, is plain enough to every impartial reader, by chap. 25. parg. 2. where it is aſſerted, That out of the viſible church, there is no ordinary poſſibility of ſalvation: but what God may do by extraordinary methods, is not determined. And by the anſwer to the 88th queſt. of the ſhorter catechiſm, which terms the word, ſacraments, and prayer, the outward and ordinary means

where-

whereby Christ communicates to us the benefits of Redemption. By distinguishing these as ordinary means, room is left for extraordinary; which are not impossible with God.

It was not the business of those who compiled the confession, to search into the secrets of God, or tell us of extraordinary methods, which he might take with such as had not these ordinary means. This wou'd indeed look very odd in the view of all judicious men. Should men confess their faith, where they can have no faith, for want of special revelation to build it upon! This Scrupler thinks he puts it out of doubt, that the confession makes their salvation impossible, by citing chap. 10. par. i. where it says, That all those whom God hath predestinated unto life——he is pleased to call by his word. Now let the reader judge, if this passage, he so much boasts of in his Narrative, page 19. can be understood but of the ordinary way of God's dealing with men; and whether any Church in her publick confession of faith, or any person in particular, should make the extraordinary Methods of God's dealing with men a part of it? These I am sure we know nothing about, and consequently have nothing to do with. We deny not but that God, may by some extraordinary method, reveal Christ to a heathen and save him; but I am sure it cannot be a part of our confession: For secret things belong unto the Lord, but things revealed to us and to our children. But the foundation of all this dispute about the salvation of heathens, is once to establish the sufficiency of the light of nature, in order to obtain salvation: and if this be sufficient to lead one heathen to heaven, why not all the world? And then where's the necessity of the Gospel Revelation? If so, we have no business with these mysterious doctrines, the Incarnation of the Son of God, the necessity of his Mediation, and the regenerating work of his holy spirit, &c. This appears farther, if we consider, that it's commonly asserted by those of this scheme, that the gospel is only a clearer revelation of the will of God, than what we have by the light

of

of nature, whereas its not only a clearer revelation, of what the light of nature teaches, but another distinct revelation, declaring and discovering such things as the light of nature could never do. This may be proved by these peculiarities of the Gospel Revelation, with which it abounds, and which make it a glorious gospel. Let us now consider his reasons.

Reason 1. "BOTH reason and revelation represent "God to us as a good and holy Being, who is pleased "with the real and sincere endeavours of his creatures, "to know his will, and to live agreeably to that know-"ledge, when acquired; but a heathen is allowed thus to "behave: who therefore can affirm that he may not, "through Jesus Christ, become the object of divine like-"ing and approbation?

ANSW. LET it be observed, that this argument is put into the form of a syllogism; and according to the rules of logick and true reasoning, there ought to be no more in the conclusion than is in the premises. There is not one word of Christ in any of his two first propositions, but behold how he brings his name into the conclusion: to blind the eyes of inadvertant readers! For if the heathens be allowed, without Christ, sincerely to know and obey the will of God, and if God, of his meer Goodness, be pleased with such endeavours in them, why does he add in the conclusion, that through Christ they become the objects of divine approbation? Let any account for this, who can. And why does he pitch upon the heathens, more than other infidels, Jews and Turks? Surely the Confession of Faith gives him no occasion, which mentions not the heathens at all. Again seeing he will plead the cause of the heathens, he should have told us, whether he means those in *Brazil*, and about the *Cape* of *Good Hope*, or heathens at large? Or if he speaks of those who live in those places where christianity is known and professed? And means that they sincerely endeavour to know and obey the will of God, tho' they reject the gospel: and

that

that these may become the objects of divine likeing. If he say that he means such, our *Deists* are extremely obliged to him for his charity.

ANSW. 2d. HERE seem to be new terms of divine acceptance found out: such as are not revealed in the scriptures, viz. the sincerity of heathens, exclusive of faith in Jesus Christ, and meriting the favour of God. Indeed some of the wisest heathens thought it an impertinence, to pray to the gods for sincerity in virtuous actions: this they said was in every man's power; and no man was obliged to the gods for being a good man, but to himself. I don't here say, they denied the necessity of prayer, but that they thought it impertinent to pray for what they believed they had already in their power.

Sed satis est orare Jovem, *quæ donat et aufert;*
Det vitam, det opes: æquum mi animum ipse parabo.
HOR. *Epistol.* Lib. 1. Epist. 18.

And this is all for which mankind should pray,
And beg of Jove, *who gives and takes away;*
Let him but life, and moderate plenty find,
And I'll provide myself an happy mind.
CREECH.

Now the Scrupler builds their salvation upon this; and holds that the absolute goodness of God exclusive of his inflexible justice, must come into the consideration upon which these sincere heathens are justified and accepted of God. This we conceive is a bold espousing the scheme of the Socinian Acceptilation; that is, such is the goodness of God to his creatures, that he accepteth of sincere penitents, without faith in the satisfaction of Christ. A certain celebrated writer *, who has not been blamed for narrowness in his principles, treating of the gospel of

* Dr. *Watts*, Vol. 1. Serm. 15. p. 305.

Christ

Chriſt deſcribes it thus. " It's a wiſe, a holy and glo-
" rious conſtitution of God for the recovery of ſinful
" man, by ſending his own Son Jeſus Chriſt in the fleſh,
" to obey his law which man had broken, to make a
" proper attonement for ſin by his death; and thus to
" ſecure the favour of God and eternal life for all that
" believe, repent and receive the offered ſalvation, toge-
" ther with the promiſe of his ſpirit, to work this faith
" and repentance in their hearts, to renew their ſinful na-
" ture into holineſs, to form them on earth, for this hap-
" pineſs in heaven". And a little after he ſays, " The
" *Socinians* and their diſciples who call themſelves chriſ-
" tians, curtail and diminiſh the goſpel of Chriſt, ſo as
" to make it ſignify little more than the dictates and
" hopes of the light of nature; that if we repent of our
" Sins paſt, and obey the Commandments of God as
" well as we can for the future, Chriſt as a great Pro-
" phet, has made full declaration that there is pardon
" for ſuch Sinners, and they ſhall be accepted unto e-
" ternal life: and all this without any dependance on his
" death as a proper ſacrifice, and with as little regard to
" the operations of his ſpirit. If this was all the goſpel
" meant, *Rom.* i. 16. the Apoſtle had no occaſion to ſay,
" with an emphaſis, *I am not aſhamed of the goſpel of*
" *Chriſt*. For the Heathen Philoſophers wou'd have
" readily receiv'd it as a thing very little different from
" what their natural reaſon might lead them to hope;
" theſe philoſophers wou'd never have ridiculed St.
" *Paul*'s preaching as meer babling." This being a juſt account of the *Socinian* ſcheme, we leave Mr. *Aprichard* to ſhew the difference between it, and what he hath aſſerted.

But it is yet more ſurprizing, that he aſſerts, that the heathens are allowed to be ſo ſincere in their endeavours to know and obey the will of God, as to become the objects of the divine favour. The apoſtle *Paul* tells us he did not allow this, *Rom.* ii. 21, 22, 23.

For when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their imaginations, and their fooliſh heart was darkned, profeſſing themſelves to be wiſe, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God, into an image made like corruptible Man, and to Birds and fourfooted beaſts, and creeping things. This was not the behaviour only of ſuch as were more groſſly ignorant, but of their wiſeſt Philoſophers either of *Greece* or *Rome*, who were all addicted to idolatry and heatheniſh vices. Therefore the Apoſtle adds ver. 32. *Who knowing the judgment of God, that they who commit ſuch things are worthy of death, not only do the ſame, but take Pleaſure in them that do them.*

Reaſon 2d. "THE Deity is repreſented as requiring "no more of men than a proportionable improvement "of their talents: but a heathen ſuppoſed to uſe all "diligence to frame his life according to the light of "nature, the only law he has to walk by, makes the "beſt uſe of his talents; will any more be required of "him? If he be damned, it's not becauſe he has not "improved his talents, but becauſe he has not the ad-"vantages, he never had the opportunity of having; "but God is not a cruel and ſevere lawgiver, requir-"ing obedience from his ſubjects, to whom his laws "have not been promulgated.

ANSW. WHEN we ſpeak of the conduct of God towards men, we had need to take care that we ſpeak the things which are right. There ſeems in this argument to be an arraigning of the juſtice of God, in his procedure with the heathen world. *But let God be juſt and every man a liar.* Let us therefore conſider that when God created man he beſtowed on him all Gifts neceſſary to his perfection, in that order of beings wherein he placed him. He ſtood compleat in all the will of God; and wanted no talents needful to perpetuate his felicity. But how man improved

theſe

theſe talents, not the light of nature, but the Scripture informs us. The beſt proteſtant divines ſince the firſt dawning of the Reformation, have maintained, in oppoſition to Pelagianiſme and Popery, that man having deſtroy'd himſelf, by his wilful diſobedience to the will of God; and the firſt man being both the natural and federal head of the human race, they all ſinned in him and fell with him in the firſt tranſgreſſion. And therefore this firſt man, in whom were all his poſterity ſeminally and originally, in the nature of the thing, could not tranſmit any other than the guilty and depraved nature to them, whereof by his own fault he was poſſeſſed. In this light we are directed by divine Revelation to conceive of the preſent depraved and ruined ſtate of humane nature.

Now, however this part of divine revelation may exceed the comprehenſion of men, in their preſent degenerate ſtate, yet the doctrine being clearly revealed, we ought to aſſent unto the truth of it, till the abſolute impoſſibility of it be demoſtrated: Which has never been done by the warmeſt of its oppoſers.

Let it be farther conſidered, that both the law of nature, that required perfect obedience, and the promiſe of ſalvation by faith in the promiſed ſeed of the woman, or the Meſſiah, were promulgated to *Adam*, and the latter was made known to his immediate deſcendants; and the tradition thereof preſerved for ſome time in different countries, as the earth was planted with inhabitants, till by the increaſe of wickedneſs, it was extremely diminiſhed. The like may be ſaid of *Noah* and his poſterity, that peopled the world after the flood. And as men in thoſe periods of time, by the abuſe of the light of Nature, and of this revelation, rendered themſelves unworthy of any farther acceſſion of ſupernatural light; it has ever ſince been the unhappy caſe of the greater part of the inhabited world, to ſit in darkneſs; which they loved rather than light.

But ſtill, however much a ſinful world have diſqualified themſelves for knowing and doing the will of God, the Law of nature muſt be binding on all men. And the inſufficiency of it for ſecuring their eternal happineſs, and the favour of God, muſt firſt and laſt be their own fault. But ſince it is certain, that man by abuſing the talents that God beſtowed upon him has loſt them, and by his own fault, is not now in a condition, either to fully know or perfectly obey the will of God; therefore his obedience muſt be imperfect, and ſhort of what God requires, and man in juſtice owes to God. Who can ſay, that in theſe circumſtances + God requires no more of man than he can do, in order to regain his favour?

ANSW. 2d. HERE it is ſuppoſed, without the leaſt ſhadow of proof, that the heathens uſe all due diligence, to frame their lives according to the light and law of nature; and make the beſt uſe of their talents. This is certainly falſe in fact. The holy ſcriptures aſſure us of the contrary. Where the heathens, without any exception, are repreſented as holding the truth in unrighteouſneſs. And 'tis expreſſly ſaid that they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, and therefore he gave them up to a reprobate mind and vile affections, *Rom.* i. 18, 32. And who is he that will be bold to reaſon againſt the juſtice of divine adminiſtration; and oblige the ſovereign of the world, to ſend the light of the goſpel equally, at all times and to all countries? While we are ſure, he never deprives any of that light, but deſervedly; nor withholds it, but for wiſe and juſt reaſons. When he removes the goſpel from ſome, and gives it to others, both his juſtice and his good pleaſure muſt come into the account. It was ſovereign grace alone, that made a difference between fallen man and fallen angels; providing a Saviour for the one, but none for the other. Thoſe who want the light of the goſpel, have the light of nature; which if they

do

do not improve, as they ought, (and it cannot be proved they do) they must be liable to condemnation for this, and not for their not improving the light of the gospel, which they never had.

Now, according to Mr. *Apricbard*'s way of reasoning, if he was to be an itinerant preacher among the heathens, he must tell them, that they were in a safe condition, and not without hope of obtaining the favour of God, if they improved the light of Nature; and used their talents as well as they could. He must assure them, according to his principles, that the humane nature still retains a stock of knowledge, and power, which if carefully attended to and improved, is sufficient to secure the favour of God; and future blessedness. But the Inspired Apostle did not act such a part, when he was sent to preach christianity to the heathen world. He did not preach up the excellency of humane nature, but the poverty of it; and the unsearchable riches of Christ, *Eph.* iii. 8. he tells them that while they were without Christ, they were without hope. *Eph.* ii. 14. And in the strongest terms, remonstrates against the opinion they had, of the sufficiency of their wisdom, to secure the favour of God, and future Blessedness. As, 1 *Cor.* i. 20, 21. *Where is the wise? where is the Scribe? where is the Disputer of this world? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God, by the foolishness of preaching, to save them that believe.* We must be allowed to judge that the Apostle's conduct was most proper in that case.

Reason 3d. "THE Apostle assures us, that not the "hearers of the law but the doers of it, are justified: "And again, That the work of the law is written on "the hearts of the Gentiles, or Heathens. If then "the law be discoverable by them, and they use all "possible diligence to frame their lives according to it, "are they not doers of the Law, in the same sense, that

"Christians

" Chriſtians are ſaid to be ſuch, and may they not be " juſtified?"

ANSW. WHAT Commentator Mr *Aprichard* has read on *Rom.* ii. 13, 14, 15. he knows beſt. But according to all ſound Commentators, on that text, and as every conſidering perſon muſt judge, the deſign of the Apoſtle there is not to ſhew, how either *Jews* or *Gentiles*, *Chriſtians* or *Heathens*, are now to be juſtified before God; but to teach all, that none had ſufficient ground to boaſt of their privileges and truſt to them, for obtaining the favour of God. The *Jews* had the law of *Moſes* written and read to them: The *Gentiles* had the remains of the Law of nature, written on their hearts; but that neither *Jews* nor *Gentiles* could obtain eternal happineſs by either of theſe laws, unleſs they gave perfect obedience to it. Now that, in the preſent degenerate ſtate of man, being impoſſible; *For there is no man* living *that ſinneth not*, 2 *Chr.* vi. 36. *If we ſay that we have no ſin, we deceive ourſelves, and the truth is not in us.* 1 *John* i. 8. *All* Jews *and* Gentiles *have ſinned, and come ſhort of the glory of God. Rom.* iii. 23. Therefore the *Gentiles* in particular, were under a neceſſity of looking out for ſome other method of obtaining the Divine favour, than any that was known to them, by the light, or within the compaſs of the power, of nature. And in the courſe of his argument, he declares to them, that it had pleaſed God, out of his infinite goodneſs, and undeſerved mercy, to appoint another way of juſtification for loſt ſinners: which is but one and the ſame for *Jews* and *Gentiles*, namely by faith in a crucified Saviour. Hence the Apoſtle tells us, *It is one God, who juſtifieth the circumciſion by faith and the uncircumciſion through faith, Rom.* iii. 30. and *Gal.* iii. 8. The ſcripture foreſeeing, that God would juſtifie the heathen thro' faith, preached before the goſpel to *Abraham*; ſaying, *in thee ſhall all nations be bleſſed.* And that all ſinners, who are ſo happy as to obtain the Divine favour, and approbation, are juſtified freely by his grace,

grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ. *Rom.* iii. 24.

Now this method of justification, which the apostle with so much zeal and industry published to the world, and established with so much evidence and strength of reasoning, is directly opposite to, and inconsistent with, that which Mr. *Aprichard* grounds his argument upon in favour of the heathen world. To assert that heathens or christians, or any sinners, are justified upon account of their obedience to the law, made known in nature or scripture, is contrary to the doctrine of the gospel: And heretofore hath only been the language of Papists, Socinians, and rigid Arminians: But never till now has been maintained by any that pretended to be of our denomination. And hence let it be observed that this Gentleman has not as yet spoke out all his scruples against subscribing the *Westminster* Confession of Faith. For what he saith here is contrary to the Article of a sinner's justification by faith in Christ.

Reason 4th., "Is not a consigning over to eternal "misery, any particular person, or set of men, pointed "out, inconsistent with christian charity? And is it "not setting up ourselves, as judges of them, in his "place to whom all judgment doth belong?

ANSW. How it may consist with christian charity, to charge a considerable number of christians with such impiety and presumption, without any just ground, let Mr. *Aprichard* and his advisers consider. Our confession of faith does not determine the final state of any man, or set of men; but only fixes the method of justification and salvation for sinners, as it is revealed in the word of God. And let every impartial reader judge whether Mr. *Aprichard* does not betray a disaffection to our principles, by taking up the slanders of our declared enemies, against our confession, without due examination, and publishing them to the world, with a view, as we apprehend, to bring our princi-

ples

ples into contempt, with unthinking people? Let him also bethink himself, whether his consigning over vast numbers of men to eternal glory and happiness without warrant from the Supreme Judge for so doing, is not a bold encroachment on his prerogative?

Scruple 3d. Founded on chap. 16. par. 7. "There "it is asserted that unregenerate men cannot perform "any action pleasing to the Deity. If they act they "sin, if they forbear to act, they sin worse. The "following reasons engage me to refuse subscription "to this doctrine."

"I OBSERVE that our inward frame is a complex "one, made up, not only of a moral principle, "but also of various affections and passions: which "in a right constitution, are subject to this moral "principle; as to the gratification of them. He there- "fore is a good and virtuous man, who in the main, "guards against the gratification of his affections and "passions, when he cannot have the approbation of "this moral principle: and the contrary conduct "constitutes the character, of a vicious and immo- "ral man. But may not an unregenerate man, tho' "in the main he gratifies his passions, without a re- "gard to the governing principle, at some times, "exercise good affections, and perform actions, with "the approbation of that moral principle? Certainly "he may. And can these be called sinful? If they be, "for what reason are they so called? Because, says the "*Westminster* Confession, they do not proceed from "an heart purified by faith. This it must be own'd, "is necessary to denominate a person good in the main, "but not every particular action: For if it proceed "from kind and social affections, if these are good so "must also the action be. But it is not done accord- "ing to the word. If it be perfectly agreeable to "the Moral Frame, it must be agreeable to the word "too. But it is not done to a right end, the glory of "God.

" God. And can we have this in view in every ac-
" tion of our lives? The bare abſence of this end can
" evidence no evil; otherwiſe it would be a crime, not
" to have it always in view. But how could we
" then think of any thing elſe; ſince no finite mind
" can retain a multiplicity of objects, nor always any
" one object? And if the bare abſence of this idea be
" not evil, the preſence of kind affections to our fellow
" creatures, cannot be evil; but muſt be good. But
" farther, if there be nothing in any action, not pro-
" ceeding from a right principle, and not done with a
" right view, which can render it approved by the
" Deity, then it muſt be abſolutely condemned by
" him. Why then is the neglect of it more highly diſ-
" approved? Or why is the doing of it, ſo circum-
" ſtanced, leſs diſpleaſing, than the neglect of it? Be-
" cauſe perhaps, for the matter of it, it is a thing which
" God commands, but it is not done becauſe he com-
" mands it, otherwiſe it would be done to a right end.
" But it is of good uſe to themſelves and others, there-
" fore it is leſs diſpleaſing to God. If then the good
" effects of actions take away any degree of his diſap-
" probation, an action intended to produce a high de-
" gree of evil, if it contrary to the intention of the a-
" gent, produces a conſiderable good, it may be leſs
" diſpleaſing to the Deity, than an action intended to
" produce good, but which actually produces evil;
" which is abſurd."

ANSW. By this ſort of reaſoning it ſeems, our Confeſſion of Faith is not now to be tried, by the holy Scriptures; which every proteſtant has a right to demand; but by the maxims of modern philoſophy. And the moral frame is ſet up as the rule, in judging of actions whether they are good or bad. We are told how the affections and paſſions, in the human frame, are ſubject to the moral principle; as to the gratification of them, in a right conſtitution; but where this

right conſtitution is, we are not informed. Divine Revelation aſſures us that God made man upright. There was no jarring nor diſcord, but perfect rectitude, and a beautiful harmony in his conſtitution, when he came out of the hand of the Glorious Creator. But we are alſo aſſured by the word of God, and the lamentable experience of all wiſe and good men, that man is fallen by his iniquity. His whole frame is now depraved and vitiated: and man is brought under the power of ſin and death. *Becauſe the carnal mind is enmity againſt God, for it is not ſubject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be. And they that are in the fleſh cannot pleaſe God, Rom.* viii. 7. 8. The moral principle itſelf calls good evil, and evil good; and tamely yields to the uſurpation of impure luſts. So that beautiful ſubordination of the inferior to the ſuperior powers of the ſoul is not now to be found, in man's natural conſtitution. We are at a loſs then to know where this right conſtitution is to be found.

To ſuppoſe, as this Gentleman ſeems to do, that an unregenerate man can guard againſt the gratification of his carnal affections, ſo as to be a good man, *i. e.* pleaſing to God: is a wild and unſcriptural ſuppoſition; which ſtands in direct contradiction to the words of our Lord, *John* iii. 3 *Except a man be born again, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.*

MOREOVER tho' the affections and paſſions ought to be ſubject to the moral principle; yet in a right conſtitution, both this moral principle, and theſe affections ought to be ſubject to the law of God. For to ſet up any principle of nature, to govern in man, without a ſupreme law, according to which it ſhall be obliged to act; is in effect to deny a Supreme Law-giver. And ſuch a principle can be nothing really different from the Quakers light within, which they eſteem ſufficient to conduct men to happineſs, without the written word, which is contemned as a dead letter. Accordingly he

makes

makes the approbation of this moral principle ſufficient, to denominate an action good; which we cannot allow while we have our Bibles, that ſet before us the will of God, as a rule ſuperiour to every man's moral principle.

But Mr. *Aprichard* aſſerts "That an unregenerate "man (tho in the main he gratifies his paſſions with- "out regarding the governing principle) yet certainly "may, at ſome times, exerciſe good affections, and "perform actions, with the approbation of the moral "principle; which he will reckon good ones." *Anſw.* With what propriety he calls it the governing principle, while it is diſregarded and trampled upon, thro' the main of a man's life, by domineering luſts; let himſelf be accountable. But if this poſitive and confident aſſertion had the leaſt probability of being true, in the view of humane reaſon; yet whoever attends to the maxim of our bleſſed Lord, *Math.* vii. 18. muſt refuſe his aſſent to it: *A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.* And we might with the ſame reaſon, expect to gather grapes of thorns or figs of thiſtles, as to find good actions proceeding from an evil Agent, *i. e.* an unregenerate man.

Next we have ſome ſort of reaſoning againſt the Qualifications of good actions, mentioned in our Confeſſion of Faith. as,

1*ſt.* That they proceed from an heart purified by faith. This he allows neceſſary to denominate a perſon good in the main, but not to every particular action: But if the heart be not purified by faith, (and it cannot be purified otherwiſe; ſee *Acts* xv. 9. *Heb.* xi. 6.) how can a pure action proceed from it? Can a fountain ſend forth ſweet water and bitter? And faith muſt not only purifie the heart, but be the ſpring and principle of the particular actions themſelves. Hence it is ſaid, that *by faith Abel offered a more ex-*

cellent ſacrafice than Cain, *by which he obtained witneſs that he was righteous*, Heb. xi. 4. *and that without faith it is impoſſible to pleaſe God, ver.* 6. and Rom. xiv. 23. *whatſoever is not of faith is ſin.* All particular actions then not proceeding from an heart purified by faith, and from faith as their principle, are impure and ſinful by the ſcripture account.

But ſaith he, if kind and ſocial affections be good, ſo muſt the actions be that proceed from them; (tho' without faith) It ſeems then, that kind and ſocial affections can govern, upon occaſion, and ſupply the defect of the moral Principle, and denominate the actions good that proceed from them; and ſo he pulls down, what he had juſt now ſet up. But if faith be wanting and the heart not purified, it is hard to conceive how theſe affections can be good. Good affections in an impure and wicked heart, is a contradiction in itſelf. Let theſe affections be as kind and ſocial as he can ſuppoſe, they muſt be tainted with the corruption of the heart, from whence they proceed.

The 2d. qualification of good actions, in the Weſtminſter Confeſſion, is that they be done according to the word. Againſt which he argues, "If the action be agreeable to the Moral Frame, it muſt be agreeable to the word too. Had he ſaid, if an action be agreeable to the word, it muſt be agreeable to the moral frame in a right conſtitution, this had been to ſpeak as becomes a chriſtian divine. But to ſay if it be agreeable to the Moral Frame, it muſt be agreeable to the Word too; looks like ſetting up the moral frame above the word of God, to be the ſupreme rule of humane actions. And plainly juſtifies the erroneous principle of thoſe, who ſet up ſomething, that is in every man, as his ſufficient rule; without the written word. Can there be any thing ſaid more diſhonourable to the holy word of the bleſſed God? It is remarkable that ſome gentlemen on that ſide of the queſtion are full of high

encomiums

encomiums on the word of God, when they would decry our Confeſſien of Faith; tho' we ever hold it in ſubordination to the word of God, as our only rule: But when the ſaid word ſtands in competition with the moral frame, or private judgment, we do not find them at all times giving due reſpect to it.

THE 3d qualification of a good action, according to the *Weſtminſter* Confeſſion, is, that it be done to a right end, the glory of God. To this he objects "Can we have this in view in every action of our lives? *Anſr.* The Apoſtle tells us we muſt, 1 *Cor.* x. 31. *Whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatſoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.* Will this gentleman preſume to correct the Apoſtle, as if he commanded what was impoſſible? As God is the glorious Creator and Preſerver of all things, it is moſt fit that his glory ſhould be the chief end of humane actions; that is ſuch as are performed by man, as a moral agent. We hope Mr. *Aprichard* does not, with the profane ſcribler of the addreſs to the church of *Scotland*, take ſuch actions to be meant, as are meerly natural: That vile performance does not deſerve the leaſt regard. And I cannot ſee what good end it can ſerve, to ſpread it among Chriſtian people.

INDEED it cannot be expected, that an unregenerate man ſhould make the Glory of God his chief end: For God is not in all his thoughts, *Pſal.* x. 4. but the character of a godly man is that he *ſets the Lord always before him*, *Pſal.* xvi. 8. Now thoſe moral philoſophers that give up the glory of God, as the ultimate end of humane actions, muſt alſo, in conſequence, be thought to leave him out of their moral ſyſtem. And if, according to their way of reaſoning, the glory of God muſt not be taken for our chief end, nor the word of God for our only rule, we have juſt reaſon to apprehend, that ſuch doctrines will have a pernicious influence both on knowledge and practice: and be greatly prejudicial to the ſouls of people.

For

For if the chief end be not rightly ſettled in the firſt place, the whole ſcheme of morality is perverted: And every ſtep of a man's way muſt be wrong that is taken in purſuance of a wrong ultimate end.

He proceeds. "The abſence of this chief end can "evidence no evil in the action; otherwiſe it would "be a crime, not to have it always in view." *Anſr.* Wherever there is a total abſence of this chief end, another is ſubſtituted in its place by every rational agent. And it muſt be ſo, for rational agents act for ſome end, and of all the ends they act for ſome one muſt be the chief. Now who will aſſure us, that to depart from the original deſign of our creation, and ſet up any other in its place, is not a very great moral evil! He adds, "but how could we then think of any thing "elſe, ſince no finite mind can retain a multiplicity of "objects, nor always the ſame objects? *Anſr.* The main difficulty here is, to know where the difficulty lies. It's a known rule, that what is laſt in the execution, muſt be firſt in the intention. A juſt and habitual concern for the glory of God, and the neceſſary means of advancing it, is ſufficient. If we have a buſineſs in ſome diſtant place, and know the road, when once we have fixed our deſign to travel to it, it's not neceſſary that we always think on that place, and nothing elſe; yet every ſtep we take is in purſuance of our deſign. What he ſays next ſeems to have no better aſpect on morality, *viz.* "If the bare abſence of "this idea be not evil, the preſence of kind affections, "to our fellow creatures, cannot be evil; but muſt be "good." *Anſr.* If theſe kind affections to our fellow creatures, be excluſive of that ſupreme regard we owe to God, they muſt be among the greateſt of moral evils, in loving the creature more than the Creator; a finite more than an Infinite good.

Again he ſaith, "If nothing be in an action, not "proceeding from a right principle, nor done with a

"right

" right view, which can render it approved by the Dei-
" ty; then it must be absolutely condemn'd by him.
Answ. And where is the absurdity? For according to the received maxim, *bonum est ex integrâ causâ sed malum ex quolibet defectu.* A good action must have every thing necessary to make it such; but any one defect will make it evil. That young man mentioned *Mark* x. 21. is a full proof of this; notwithstanding of what Mr. *Aprichard* has offered against it. *Narrative page* 30. He performed a great deal of actions, that were commanded of God, and matterially good; for which our Lord Christ loved him, with a love of compassion; but one defect stained all that he did: *viz.* want of a superlative love to God. Wherefore he parted with Christ, and cleave to his earthly possessions. Which defect spoiled the acceptance of his person and service.

AGAIN he asks why then is the neglect of it more highly disapproved? Answer, because by the neglecting of it, the divine authority is contemned, and rebellion in a greater degree discovered. He continues, " Its not done " because God commands it, otherwise it would be done to a right end." Answer the consequence is not just: for men may perform what God commands, with very sinful views. As *Jehu* executed judgment on the house of *Ahab*, yet his end was to gratifie his own ambition. He urgeth farther 'tis of good use to ourselves and others, therefore less displeasing to God. Answer, It's hard to say whether he speaks here of the action, or the omission of it, he so confounds them together. But if he means the action itself, it must be allowed, that tho the tendency of obeying the precepts of the second table of the law, is to promote our own, and our neighbour's good; yet the great Law-giver never intended, that men should rest here, and make this the ultimate end of their actions.

AT last he concludes thus, " If the good effect of
" actions take away any degree of his disapprobation,
" an action intended to produce an high degree of evil,

" if

" if it contrary to the intention of the agent, produces a " conſiderable good, it may be leſs diſpleaſing to the " Deity than an action intended to produce good, but " which actually produceth evil: which is abſurd". Anſwer, The queſtion was concerning the chief end of humane actions, this he drops, and argues about their effects; and ſeems to confound them, forgetting the good old diſtinction, between the end of the work, and the end of the worker: which is clearly examplified in the crucifixion of our Saviour, and the ſelling of *Joſeph* into *Egypt*. When theſe moſt wicked actions were done, with the moſt deteſtable views, they produced great and good effects: yet theſe effects took away no degree of ſinfulneſs from the actions. The Confeſſion of Faith doth not aſſert, that actions are denominated either good or bad; from their effects. Which may be unknown till long after the agent is dead.

Scruple 4th. Is founded chap. 1. par. 10. " THE " ſupreme judge by which all controverſies of religion " are to be determined—and in whoſe ſentence we are " to reſt, can be no other but the holy ſpirit ſpeaking " in the ſcripture. And chap. 20. par. 2. God alone " is lord of the conſcience— Alſo chap. 25. par. 6. " There is no other head of the church but the Lord Je- " ſus Chriſt. Compared with chap. 31. par. 3. It be- " longeth to ſynods and councils miniſterially to deter- " mine controverſies of faith, and caſes of conſcience,— " which determinations if conſonant to the word of God, " are to be received with reverence and ſubmiſſion, not " only for their agreement with the word, but alſo for the " power whereby they are made as being an ordinance " of God, &c. If ſynods or counſels may determine " controverſies of faith and caſes of conſcience and en- " force thoſe determinations under the penalties of non- " communion and puniſhments inflicted by the civil " magiſtrate: Is not this uſurping eccleſiaſtical ſupre- " macy, and lording it over the conſcience? How then

" are

" are theſe paſſages reconcileable? For theſe reaſons I " cannot ſubſcribe the above mentioned doctrines of the " Confeſſion."

ANSW. SINCE Mr. *Aprichard* thought it proper for him, to invade our principles and conſtitution, in this hoſtile manner, it ſeems he deſign'd to give us an admirable ſwatch of his military conduct, in ſecuring the front and rear of his ſcruples: In his firſt ſcruple he ſtrikes at the power of the civil magiſtrate; this laſt is deſigned, to level that of the church. And if both theſe powers ordained of God were depoſed, from meddling with religion, and all the care of its concerns intruſted in the hand of private judgment, or, which is the ſame thing as it ſtands here, conſcience, then he and every man elſe may believe, profeſs and practice what they pleaſe; when there is no power on earth, that may call them to an account. And in order to the accompliſhment of this Grand Undertaking, he will make the powers allowed by our Confeſſion to the magiſtrate and the church inconſiſtent, not only between themſelves, but alſo with the ſupreme power of our Lord, as the Sole Head of the church; and of the holy ſpirit ſpeaking in the ſcriptures, as the Supreme Judge in all controverſies of religion!

BUT ſhould not this gentleman have pointed out to us, thoſe inconſiſtencies he ſo confidently talks of? Was it enough for him to ask, with an air of aſſurance? Is not this uſurping eccleſiaſtical ſupremacy? and lording it over conſcience?

BUT ſince he has not offered the leaſt proof for the alledged inconſiſtency of theſe paſſages in our Confeſſion: we ſhall endeavour briefly to demonſtrate the harmony of them, therefore let it be obſerved.

1. THAT the Confeſſion does not make, the determinations of ſynods and councils, the Rule of faith to the church, but expreſly calls them miniſterial only; and aſſerts that they are to be received, as far as they

are agreeable to the word of God: and regarded as made, by ſuch as have their commiſſion and power from Chriſt. Now wherein can be the inconſiſtency, between this and the holy ſpirit's ſpeaking in the ſcripture, as the Supreme Judge of controverſies? or Chriſt's being the ſole King and Head of his church? The miniſters of Chriſt are obliged by their office, and their commiſſion to that office, received from Chriſt their Maſter, to ſpeak the ſame things, which the ſpirit ſpeaketh in the ſcriptures, and no other. *And Jeſus came and ſpake to them, ſaying, all power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore and teach* (make diſciples of) *all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt: teaching them to obſerve all things, whatſoever I have commanded you: and lo I am with you alway, even to the end of the world, Amen.* Matth. xxviii. 18, 19, 20. And let not any delude themſelves, by giving into a groundleſs imagination, that what our Lord ſpoke in that text concerns none but the Apoſtles in perſon, who are removed by death many ages ago; for the promiſe of Chriſt's ſpecial preſence is made, to men living in the church, in all ages, to the end of the world: which takes in others, beſides the Apoſtles. And hence it is plain, that theſe others are alſo concerned in the commiſſion given, to diſcharge duties; and the directions which are alſo given, for the right diſcharge of them.

Indeed if, with ancient and modern Infidels, any perſons reject a goſpel miniſtry, as prieſt-craft; and make no difference between the uſurped power of the Church of *Rome*, and the ſcriptural power of a chriſtian reformed Church; and if they ſwallow the wild ſchemes and ſophiſtical reaſonings, of ſome modern writers: they will quickly find themſelves bewildered, and ſurrounded with contradictions on all hands. But ſuch for their own ſake would do well to conſider, that theſe contradictions ariſe, not from the inſtitutions of God, nor the nature of things; but their own ignorance and miſtakes.

takes. Beſides ſome *Engliſh* Diſſenters have carried their prejudices againſt all Church-authority, tho' it is no more than miniſterial, or the authority of ſervants, ſo high as to charge all that plead for it's Divine right, under any form whatſoever, with the ſame perſecuting ſpirit, that appears in the Church of *Rome*. We perſuade ourſelves, that ſerious Chriſtians and ſound Proteſtants would not allow themſelves in ſuch a conduct, if they did but ſeriouſly conſider, that the abuſe of divine inſtitutions does not take away the lawful uſe of them. And when God's ordinances are corrupted, they ſhould be reformed, but not rejected. If this holds in the word and ſacraments, why not equally in that power and diſcipline, that Chriſt has appointed in his church? Surely Chriſt the ſole King of his Church, did not ſend out his miniſters, as mere moral orators only to charm their hearers with the beauty of vertue, or frighten them with the deformity of vice. If ſo what right have they to preach, reprove and rebuke, in the name of Chriſt, more than in the name of *Plato*, *Cicero*, or *Seneca*? The power of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt was with the Church of *Corinth*, even when the Apoſtle was abſent from them, 1 *Cor.* v. 4. becauſe Chriſt's ordinary miniſters were there; who were authorized, by a commiſſion from Chriſt, to judge and cenſure the inceſtuous perſon in the name of their Lord and maſter. And if ordinary miniſters teach and command nothing, but what Chriſt hath commanded, they cannot juſtly be ſaid to lord it over the conſciences of men. And if they have any authority from Chriſt they looſe none of it by acting in an aſſociated capacity as members of Church-judicatures, but rather have it ſtrengthned; The *Corinthian* miniſters were to exert one of the higheſt acts of their power when they are gathered together, as may be ſeen in the text juſt now refer'd to. *Paul* and *Barnabas* were Inſpired men, and had full power, as ſuch, to determine the controverſy; that aroſe concerning the obſervation of the Moſaic Ceremonies, yet they judg-

ed it more for the edification of the church, to have it determined in a ſynod at *Jeruſalem*, *Acts* xv.

2. Let it alſo be conſidered, That tho' God alone is Lord of conſcience, yet miniſters are to deal with the conſciences of men, in the execution of their office. And by manifeſtation of the truth, to commend themſelves to every man's conſcience in the ſight of God, 2 *Cor.* iv. 2. How often are the conſciences of men erroneous, and miſ-informed? and thereby unqualified to do their proper office? to ſtir them up to duty and convince them of ſin, from the word of God? They are often ſeared as with a hot iron; and ſuffer men to lye ſecurely in their ſins, and hold the truth in unrighteouſneſs. And hereupon miniſters are required, to exhort and rebuke with all authority.

We have already conſidered the magiſtrate's power, as a proper reſtraint upon the abuſes of Chriſtian Liberty: Mr. *Aprichard* complains as much of the authority of the Church, in inflicting the cenſure of non-communion, as he calls it, on account of error, as being inconſiſtent with the Kingly Power of Chriſt; of which it ſeems rather to be a ſtrong proof; in as much as that cenſure is inflicted in Chriſt's name, and by his authority.

It muſt indeed be confeſſed, that this cenſure has been very much abuſed; rather to ſerve the worldly interreſts and paſſions of men, than to advance the Kingdom of Chriſt. And as our Lord himſelf ſuffered by the abuſe of authority, 'tis no wonder that his ſervants ſhould. But ſtill it muſt be owned, that the ſins of men can never diſannul the appointments of God.

Now in order to give ſatisfaction, to ſuch as may be under doubts and ſcruples about this matter; we ſhall humbly offer a few things to their ſerious and impartial conſideration: By which we hope it will evidently appear, that our Lord Jeſus Chriſt hath lodged, a proper authority in his Church, by the light and according to the laws of his word, to judge in controverſies of faith,

faith, and to inflict the cenſures of admonition and excommunication, upon ſuch as ſhall be found ſpreading ſuch errors and hereſies among his people, as will corrupt the church and endanger the ſouls of men. In order to which be pleaſed to conſider,

1*ſt*. That there may be ſuch corruptions in a church, as will juſtifie perſons in a ſeparation from her communion. This will be allowed by all proteſtants. Otherwiſe they could not juſtify their ſeparation from the Church of *Rome*. And it is equally juſt and reaſonable, that a Church have a power to preſerve herſelf from corruption, by ſeparating and excluding from her communion, ſuch members as are found actually endeavouring to corrupt her. The natural Body has a right to cut off a mortified member, in order to preſerve its life. The Body politick, or civil ſociety, has a right to exclude ſuch offenders as would bring it to ruin. If the Church, which is the Body of Chriſt, hath not a power to exclude corrupted members from its communion, it is in a worſe condition than any other ſociety, that God has appointed: and not furniſhed with powers neceſſary for its own preſervation. Which no reaſonable perſon will believe.

2. The juſt and neceſſary exerciſe of this power is no encroachment, upon the royal prerogative of Chriſt, as ſole King of the church. But the neglect of it is a diſhonour to him, and a ſin againſt him. We have his own undeniable teſtimony for the truth of this propoſition, *Rev*. ii. 14, 15. where he pleads a controverſy with the angel (that is the miniſter or miniſters) of the Church of *Pergamos*, becauſe they did not exclude from their Communion, ſuch as taught the doctrine of the *Nicolaitans*. The ſin for which theſe miniſters were reproved, was, having ſuch among them and retaining them in Communion. And if that was their ſin, it was their duty to caſt them out; and they had a power to do it. Our Lord alſo ſpeaks his diſpleaſure againſt

againſt the Miniſters of the church of *Thyatyra*, becauſe they ſuffered that woman *Jezabel*, that call'd herſelf a propheteſs, to teach and to ſeduce his ſervants, to commit fornication, and to eat things ſacrificed unto Idols. *Rev.* ii. 20. From whence it evidently appears, that it is the will of our Lord Chriſt, that his miniſters ſhould exerciſe the cenſures of depoſition and excommunication, upon obſtinate ſeducers and ſpreaders of Hereſies. And it is the right of the Church of Chriſt to have ſuch caſt out of communion. And it is the duty of ſuch as are intruſted, with the care of her rights and concerns, to do it in his name, and by virtue of that power which he enjoys as Mediator, to rule on earth, and in the mids of his enemies, *Pſal.* cx. 2. The Church of *Scotland* have lately declared their ſenſe of this duty, as incumbent on all Miniſters, by excommunicating one Mr. *Mc. Lachlin*, for writing a book in defence and commendation of the ſin of fornication; whereby he revived the abominable doctrine of the *Nicolitans*.

3. When the Apoſtle had planted a Church in *Galatia*; ſome preached among them, the doctrine of juſtification by the works of the law. Whereupon the Apoſtle writes an epiſtle to them, wherein he tells them, *Gal.* i. 7, 8, 9. *I marvel that you are ſo ſoon removed, from him that called you to the grace of Chriſt, unto another Goſpel: which is not another, but there be ſome that trouble you, and would pervert the Goſpel of Chriſt.* 8. *But though we, or an Angel from Heaven preach any other Goſpel unto you, than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accurſed.* 9. *As we ſaid before, ſo ſay I now again, If any man preach any other Goſpel unto you, than that ye have received, let him be accurſed.* The meek and holy Apoſtle was exceedingly zealous upon this occaſion, and we ought not to think it ſtrange that he ſhould; ſince the article of a ſinner's juſtification before God, is a matter of the higheſt moment: The whole Goſpel ſtands upon it, and the Church of Chriſt

muſt

muſt ſtand or fall with it. The word *Anathema* ſignifies ſeparation: to intimate that ſuch as perverted that doctrine, ſhould be ſeparated from communion, as deteſtable ſeducers. The Apoſtle tells them they had been called by the Goſpel to the grace of Chriſt, but if they depended now upon their own works, or obedience to the law, they were removed from Chriſt, and fallen from grace. And it is to little purpoſe in this caſe to diſtinguiſh between works done in obedience to the Ceremonial and Moral Law; for all works, when depended on as the cauſe of our juſtification before God, ſtand in direct oppoſition to juſtification by grace and are inconſiſtent with it, *Rom.* iii. 23, 24. Here then is a Divine warrant for the Miniſters of Chriſt to ſeparate from the communion of the Church, by the high cenſure of excommunication, ſuch as publiſh errors, deſtructive of the doctrine of juſtification by free grace, if they cannot be reclaimed by the milder method of admonition. And this directly ſerves the honour and intereſt of Chriſt; as the only Foundation on which the Church is built.

4. We have a Precedent for caſting perſons out of communion for publiſhing errors. 1 *Tim.* i. 19, 20. compared with 2 *Tim.* ii. 17, 18. *Holding faith and a good conſcience, which ſome having put away, concerning faith have made ſhipwrack. Of whom is* Hymeneus *and* Alexander, *whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaſpheme.* Compare this with 2 Tim. ii. 16, 17, 18. *But ſhun prophane and vain bablings, for they will increaſe unto more ungodlineſs, and their word will eat as doth a canker, of whom is* Hymeneus *and* Philetus; *Who concerning the truth have erred, ſaying that the Reſurrection is paſt already, and overthrow the faith of ſome.*

The crime for which theſe perſons were cenſured, was promoting infidelity with reſpect to the reſurrection, ſaying that it was paſt already. They having plunged into this error made ſhipwreck of their own faith, and blabbing it out had overthrown the faith of

ſome

ſome others, for which cauſes the Apoſtle delivers them to Satan, as deteſtable wretches, that were by no means to be ſuffer'd in the Communion of Chriſtians.

'Tis indeed a debated point, what is preciſely to be underſtood, by delivering to Satan? But whatever be underſtood by it, non-communion muſt be the neceſſary conſequence of it: for no Chriſtians would hold communion, with ſuch as were in a ſolemn manner delivered over to Satan, by an Apoſtle of Chriſt; till he ſhould give an order to receive them in again. And the beſt interpreters generally agree, that it is for ſubſtance the ſame with Excommunication: which is in effect caſting a perſon out of the communion of the Church of Chriſt, and delivering him again into the wicked world, whereof Satan is called the God, 2 *Cor.* iv. 4. and the Prince that worketh in the children of diſobedience, *Eph.* ii. 2. and therefore this dreadful cenſure ought never to be trifled with, nor inflicted on any, but upon weighty grounds and clear evidence.

But ſome except againſt this inſtance, as not to be drawn into precedent, by ordinary miniſters, becauſe it was the act of an Inſpired Apoſtle.

ANSW. For that very reaſon it ought to be received as a precedent and a rule to guide ordinary Miniſters, in caſes of the ſame nature. And we find this ſame Apoſtle, ſharply reproving the *Corinthians*, becauſe they had neglected to inflict this ſame cenſure upon the inceſtuous perſon; till they were excited to it, by expreſs orders from himſelf, 1 *Cor.* v.

5. Professing and ſpreading pernicious errors, contrary to the great Doctrines of the Goſpel, is juſt ground of offence to a Chriſtian Brother. And if ſo, the offended has a right to enter his complaint againſt the offender, before a Church-judicature (if other methods for obtaining ſatisfaction have been in vain attempted) and the Church has a right to hear ſuch a complaint, and commence a judicial proceſs againſt ſuch offender:

And,

And, if he cannot be reclaimed by admonitions, to inflict the cenſure of non-communion upon him. According to our Saviour's rule in caſe of ſcandal, *Matth.* xviii. 15, — 21. and theſe words, 17. ver. *Let him be unto thee as an heathen and a publican*, ſeem directly to point out that cenſure. Which alſo the Apoſtle *Paul* enjoins to be inflicted in like caſes, *Rom.* xvi. 17. *Now I beſeech you, brethren, mark them who cauſe diviſions and offences, contrary to the Doctrine which ye have learned and avoid them.* And, *Tit.* iii. 10. *A man that is an heretick, after the firſt and ſecond Admonition, reject.*

6. Laſtly, THERE is a rule given by the Apoſtle *John* in his ſecond Epiſtle, ver. 7,—12. which is very proper to be conſider'd in the caſe under our conſideration For thereby Chriſtians have their claim of rights ſettled; and their behaviour towards Intrants, and Candidates for the holy Miniſtry, directed. The words of the Apoſtle are theſe v. 7. *For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confeſs not that Jeſus Chriſt is come in the fleſh. This is a deceiver and an antichriſt.* v. 8. *Look to yourſelves that we loſe not theſe things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward.* v. 9. *Whoſoever tranſgreſſeth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Chriſt, hath not God: He that abideth in the doctrine of Chriſt he hath both the Father and the Son.* v. 10. *If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your houſe, neither bid him God ſpeed.* v. 11. *For he that biddeth him God ſpeed is partaker of his evil deed.*

THE ſenſe of the words ſeems to be in ſhort this, That when Errors and Seducers abound in the world, and ſcreen themſelves under a ſpecious pretence to the chriſtian name, it is the duty of Chriſtians and eſpecially of Miniſters, to uſe all reaſonable precautions leſt they be impoſed upon by them; and that it is their Juſt Right that no perſon be received or entertained among them as a Teacher, till he firſt give them Reaſonable Satisfaction as to his ſoundneſs in the Faith, by declaring his belief of

the doctrines of the Gospel, in opposition to the prevailing errors and corruptions of the world. And that whosoever shall receive or encourage any Intrant, without such satisfaction, shall be guilty with him of all the mischiefs he may do to the souls of men and the peace of the Church.

WHERE these two things are easy to be observed, 1. The distinguishing character which the Apostle gives here of a deceiver and an antichrist, or one that is to be accounted such, is not that he openly maintains any false doctrines, but that he refuses to confess true doctrines in opposition to the errors that are prevailing in the world. For instance, *he confesses not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh*; in opposition to some who at that time denied the Deity of Christ, and others who denied his Humanity. The Apostle puts the stress, in this case, upon not confessing the Doctrine of Christ, and not abiding in that Doctrine by an external profession as an evidence of an inward belief of it. Errors are various and endless: The right rule is fixed and invariable. He that owns this in its proper sense, in effect disowns all errors, which are but so many deviations from it. This then ought to give satisfaction; and nothing less can reasonably be thought sufficient for that end.

2. That it is the Right and Privilege of Christian Societies, that the truths of Christ be professed and preached among them, according to the true meaning of his word, in which he has delivered them. When this is done, it is a good mark of that Church to which Christ has promised his gracious presence in all ages to the end of time. *Matth.* xxviii. 19, 20. But when the important doctrines that Christ has committed to his Church to be kept, are falsified and corrupted, or the open profession of them dropt, then the Privileges of Christian People are invaded, and the Ministerial Office perverted from the end for which it was designed. That Candidate therefore who refuses to give such a confession of his faith, as shall be satisfying to such as he is to associ-

ate

ate with and officiate among, thereby forfeits all right to miniſterial communion among them: And they can never juſtifie themſelves in receiving and ſupporting him. And it ſeems to have been taken for granted by all chriſtians, that men's right even to chriſtian communion depends upon their making and maintaining a credible profeſſion of the chriſtian religion; and therefore perſons come to age have not been admitted by Baptiſm, till they firſt profeſſed their faith in Chriſt and promiſed obedience to him, and ſo made it appear that they were his diſciples, and not ſtrangers or enemies to him.

Now if ſuch as refuſe a confeſſion of true doctrine have no Right to Miniſterial or Chriſtian communion, hence it appears that chriſtians ought not to hold communion with ſuch as declare and diſpute againſt the great doctrines of the Goſpel; and for the oppoſite errors.

A great many more ſcripture teſtimonies might be adduced to ſupport our doctrine, which I do not mention. It may alſo be ſtrongly inforced by conſiderations drawn from the nature and reaſon of the thing, upon ſcripture principles. Piety towards God, Charity towards other men, and Juſtice towards our own ſouls, all conſpire to recommend and authorize ſuch conduct, as refuſing to hold communion with ſuch as openly plead for dangerous errors and ſtrive to corrupt the faith of chriſtians.

1. Piety towards God requires it, For when the High Lord and Governor of the univerſe vouchſafes to ſpeak to us from heaven, and to reveal truths of the greateſt importance, with a gracious deſign to enlighten, ſanctifie and ſave ſinful men, and prepare them for everlaſting glory and felicity with himſelf; can it be thought that good men, and faithful miniſters, who are ſet for the defence of Chriſt's Goſpel, and to watch for the ſouls of his people, ought patiently to bear the perverting and falſifying thoſe ſacred truths and heavenly inſtructions? Earthly governors would reſent wreſting their laws, to

quite different purpoſe from what they were intended for, and thereby deceiving and miſleading their ſubjects from obedience to them. And ſhall not the God of heaven reſent any indignities of that kind; or ſuffering them to paſs without rebuke? It is the cauſe of God and of Religion, and for the preſervation of the Chriſtian Church in the world, to ſtand up in oppoſition to ſuch attempts. And to admit thoſe who corrupt and deprave the ſenſe of the Holy Scriptures in any groſs manner, to the common honours and privileges of chriſtians, would be the ready way to introduce all imaginable confuſion in Faith and worſhip; and to deface chriſtianity to ſuch a degree, that common chriſtians at leaſt, could not know how or where to find it. And it would ſpoil the chriſtian church of its Privileges, and lay it in common with the world, that lyes in darkneſs and wickedneſs. The chriſtian religion would not any more, as ſo profeſſed and practiſed (if it were poſſible that it ſhould at all be known in ſuch circumſtances) be the way of truth, nor on that account be evil ſpoken of.

2. As piety towards God and reverence towards his Sacred Word requires ſuch conduct, ſo Charity towards all men. Charity towards the ignorant, as carrying inſtruction with it. Charity towards the unwarry, as giving them warning to ſtand off, and keep themſelves from infection. Charity towards the confirmed Chriſtians, as encouraging them ſtill more to go on in their way of Faith and Holineſs, and preſerving them from inſults for ſo doing. Charity towards the whole Church, as ſupporting both their Unity and Purity. Charity towards all mankind; towards them that are without, as it is recommending pure Religion to them, in the moſt advantageous Light, obviating their moſt plauſible Calumnies, and giving them leſs occaſion to blaſpheme. Yea it is the moſt Charitable office that Chriſtians have in their power to exerciſe towards offenders themſelves, that corrupt the Faith of Chriſt, to reject and diſown them,

them, in order to make them ashamed, 2 *Thes.* iii. 14. to humble them, and bring them to repentance, that so their souls may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus, 1 *Cor.* v. 5. It is true this method may often fail of having this desirable effect; as the judgments of God also often fail: and where they do not cure they irritate, harden and render worse; which is no argument against the salutary nature of the remedy, but shews only the incurable disorder of the patient.

3 JUSTICE to our own souls requires, that we use all prudent and proper endeavours, to discountenance gross errors and heresies, by refusing communion with their open favourers and abetters. For otherwise we become partakers of their evil doings, as the Apostle *John* speaks. To own them as our Fellow-christians or Fellow-ministers is to take their guilt, or greater, upon ourselves. I say greater guilt, because if we suppose them to be really under a mistake and following their own mistaken judgment, yet while we are of a contrary judgment, it cannot but be greater guilt in us, to smother our real sentiments, and oppose the light of our consciences, and not to bear our testimony in such a way as Christ has appointed, against all notorious corruptions of Christian Doctrine, Faith or Worship.

FROM these considerations we hope serious Christians may receive satisfaction, that it is the will and appointment of the Great Master of assemblies, that obstinate opposers of true and important doctrines, and abetters of dangerous errors should be separated from Ministerial and Christian Communion with the People of God.

BUT perhaps Mr. *Aprichard* may complain, that his objections against our Doctrine are not as yet touched upon nor answered. To which it may be replied, that his objections in this scruple consist only of some general invidious and unjust insinuations, about usurping Ecclesiastical Supremacy, and lording it over the Conscience,

ence, and ſo ſtated they deſerve no anſwer. But if he or his friends think them worthy of conſideration, let them reduce them to a certainty, and they ſhall be examined with candour. And if any of our impartial and conſcientious readers be impreſſed in the mean time with ſo bold and publick a charge, as if there was really ſome weight in it; we refer them for ſatisfaction, to the learned and ingenious Dr. *Waterland*, in his excellent treatiſe, entitled, *The Importance of the Doctrine of the Holy Trinity aſſerted, in reply to ſome late Pamphlets*, the 4th and 5th chapters. Where he largely and ſolidly proves that communion is not to be held with ſuch as reject and impugn the fundamental Doctrines of Chriſtianity, anſwers the objections of adverſaries, and rectifies miſtakes. If there be any Fundamentals in Religion, they muſt come into the Queſtion concerning Controverſies of Faith and caſes of Conſcience. And if the Paſtors whom Chriſt has ſent to feed his Church, have no right to interpoſe in ſuch controverſies, to put difference between the precious and the vile, to ſupport the Orthodox, and cenſure Hereticks and blaſphemers; then the Unity of the Faith is diſſolved, Chriſtian Societies muſt disband: The Impure world is let into the Church, and by that means the Pure Church is turned out of the world.

REMARKS

UPON

Mr. *Aprichard's* NARRATIVE

OF THE

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

GENERAL SYNOD of *Ulster*, at *Dungannon*, *June*—— 1739.

PART SECOND.

WHEN the pious *Jews*, releaſed from captivity, were employed in building the Houſe of God; ſome of their neighbours came to them, pretending an equal Zeal for the Honour of the ſame God, and offer'd them their Aſſiſtance in that good work. But the council that had the direction of affairs, knowing well that they were no friends to the *Jews*, nor any of their undertakings, did not admit them, *Ezra* iv. 1, 2, 3. *Now when the*

the adverſaries of Judah *and* Benjamin *heard that the children of the captivity builded the temple unto the Lord God of* Iſrael: *Then they came to* Zerubbabel, *and to the chief of the fathers, and ſaid unto them, let us build with you; for we ſeek your God as ye do, and we do ſacrafice unto him ſince the days of* Eſar-haddon *king of* Aſur, *which brought us up hither. But* Zerubbabel, *and* Jeſhua *and the reſt of the chief of the fathers of* Iſrael *ſaid unto them, you have nothing to do with us to build an houſe unto our God, but we ourſelves together will build unto the Lord God of* Iſrael, *as king* Cyrus *the king of* Perſia *hath commanded us.* This prudent and harmleſs conduct was reſented by theſe pretended friends, as highly injurious treatment, and a great noiſe was made in the world about it. The diſguiſe of friendſhip was immediately thrown off, the *Jews* and their deſigns were miſ-repreſented and oppoſed with open violence till a full ſtop was put to their proceedings. This Paſſage is offered as a proper key to open the tendency of Mr. *Ap-d*'s. Narrative. In the very beginning of that performance he tells the world that it is a publick appeal to their judgment, and he raiſes a tragical outcry about ſome highly injurious treatment he has received from the General Synod. Now we join iſſues with him, Let the impartial world judge on whoſe ſide the injuſtice lyes and what this injurious treatment is, for which he calls to the world to condemn the Synod? After ſuch loud complaints ſome great matter might be expected: but upon a fair examination, it will be found to amount to no more than this: That when he had entered his exceptions againſt ſeveral important Doctrines of our Confeſſion of Faith, the Synod ſuſpended their good opinion of him, and entered a reſolution to enquire farther into his principles, for their ſatisfaction, before they would truſt him with the office of a Fellow-Builder with them; leſt being admitted before he ſhould have given ſuch ſatisfaction, he ſhould throw down what they thought themſelves in conſcience obliged to build up.

The

They did not reſolve that he ſhould not be a Fellow-Paſtor with them. No, he declin'd them, and withdrew his ſubjection to them, before they came to any ſuch reſolution as that. Neither were they deſigned to come to any ſuch reſolution at that Synod: But only to refer him to the Presbytery of *Armagh*, that had licenced him, that time might diſcover, whether he could reconcile himſelf to the Principles of our Confeſſion, or give ſatisfaction to the Synod, at their next meeting, concerning his own? This being a fair ſtate of the caſe, let the world judge whether the Synod's conduct towards Mr. *Apd.* was not ſuch as became honeſt men, and faithful Miniſters of Jeſus Chriſt?

THIS being premiſed in general, proceed we now to his particular Complaints. The firſt is againſt the Preſbytery of *Armagh*, Nar. p. 4. "Becauſe that tho' they, "that is the majority of them, thought themſelves obliged by an act of the General Synod, to refer the conſideration of his Scruples to that Judicature, yet they "did not tranſmit them to the ſeveral Presbyteries, in "order to their being conſidered in the Synod at *Antrim*, "*June*—1738," by which means his ordination at *Morne* was neceſſarily delayed for a whole year.

HERE I obſerve how carefully he guards a minority in that Presbytery from any blame in that matter, for it was only the majority that thought themſelves obliged by the act of the Synod. The minority then, it ſeems need not have any thing offered in their vindication, But why did none of that minority move in Mr. *Ap-d*'s favour, that his Scruples might be tranſmitted, to forward his ordination? Or was any ſuch motion made by them and oppoſed? But even in favour of the guilty majority it may be ſaid, that it was not poſſible for them to tranſmit Scruples and Reaſons ſupporting them, that were given in only by word of mouth; if they had been ever ſo willing to do it. And by his own account, p. 14 and 15, he could not ſay that his written

Scruples had been above ſix months under the conſideration of the members of the Synod. So that it was ſeveral months after the Synod at *Antrim* that he firſt gave in his Scruples to the Presbytery in writing; and then they were tranſmitted with all convenient ſpeed.

AGAIN there is a diſcourſe of ſome length, p. 5 and 6, about a motion that he ſays was made, "That "the Synod ſhould not embroil themſelves with the "conſideration of his Scruples; which he expoſes as "unworthy of a Chriſtian Miniſter, and inconſiſtent "with a regard to truth." Whether there was any ſuch motion made or not, who made it, and with what view? I cannot ſay, but ſince that motion was not ſeconded by any member, and rejected by the Synod; why ſhould the Synod be traduced in print, and expoſed in ſuch a rude manner on that account?

HOWEVER this affair came regularly before the Synod at *Dungannon June*—1739; and the Scruples being read, Mr. *Ap-d* acknowledged them to be genuine, and ſaid, "He was reſolved to adhere to them, till he "ſaw reaſon to alter his opinion," p. 14. And upon a motion made and ſeconded, the Moderator enquired, whether any Presbytery or Member of the Synod had any remarks in writing upon ſaid Scruples and Reaſons? To which it was anſwer'd, that a Member of the Presbytery of *Tyrone* had ſomething prepared to that purpoſe. Who being called, was deſired to read his Paper, which was accordingly done. In this paper the Scruples and Reaſons were reſumed *verbatim* as they were anſwered, and in the ſame manner it is now printed.

AS to this Paper Mr. *Ap-d* gravely tells us, p. 14, "That it did not at all enlighten his underſtanding, "as to the doctrines ſcrupled by him, nor can he be per-"ſuaded that it was deſign'd for that purpoſe. And "p. 31, That the Synod had no ground to believe "that any man of common ſenſe could be convinced "by it."

HERE

HERE let the Reader obſerve, 1. That Mr. *Ap-d* frequently takes upon him to judge men's ſecret views and inward motives, which are certainly known only to God. As if his judgment of the hearts and thoughts of men were ſufficient evidence upon which all the world ſhould condemn them. 2. When he had produced ſome falſifications of the Author's ſenſe and reaſoning, and inſinuated that the reſt was of a piece with his ſpecimen, he ſays, (p. 31) "That he offers theſe paſſages to "the Publick, that the world may judge, whether the "Synod had any ground to believe that any man of com-"mon ſenſe could be convinced by that paper?" This is an imperious Dictating, and a fallacious way of Impoſing upon the common ſenſe of mankind. 3. If that paper did not at all enlighten his underſtanding the world has now an opportunity of Judging whether that was owing to any defect in his underſtanding, or the paper, when the ſubſtance of it is made publick. And whether "That paper contained remarks upon a late "Pamphlet, entitled, *A ſerious Addreſs to the Church "of* Scotland? and diſcovered the author's skill, in refut-"ing ſome ſuppoſed principles of the greateſt Heathen "Philoſophers, which neither they maintained, nor he "defended?" let the world judge. There is juſt as much of theſe things in it, as there was when it was firſt read in the Synod. And, "That it was filled with "moſt bitter Inſinuations, and almoſt in every page a "new charge of Hereſy was advanced againſt him;" is as falſe as the reſt. Unleſs he thinks that when it is ſhewed in the courſe of the reaſoning, that there is an agreement between what he aſſerts, and the corrupt Principles of Hereticks, that is a charging him with Hereſie. He is neither called Papiſt nor Quaker, &c. in the whole paper. But if the Reader pleaſes, he may ſee another inſtance of ſuch agreement between what Mr. *Ap-d* aſſerts, in his ſecond Scruple, Reaſon 2d, and what is maintained by a modern Advocate for Infidelity;

which by the ſame way of reaſoning he may call a new charge of Infidelity brought againſt him. Mr. *Ap-d*'s words are to be ſeen in the former part of this paper. The Author of *Chriſtianity as Old as the Creation*, a profeſſed Deiſt, and adverſary to ſupernatural Divine Revelation, hath theſe words, p. 5 and 6, "Mens uſing "their faculties after the beſt manner they can, muſt "anſwer the end for which God gave them, and juſti- "fy their conduct.—— And that God's judgment "muſt hold proportion to the uſe they have made "of their Reaſon, and it would be in vain to uſe it, "if the due uſe of it would not juſtify them before "God." Muſt Mr. *Ap-d.* be allowed to ſpeak the ſame things, to argue upon the ſame Principles with this profeſſed enemy to Revealed Religion, and muſt not other men be allowed to take notice of it? Theſe principles have been judiciouſly and ſolidly refuted by worthy Doctor *Leland* in his anſwer to that Author.

As for Mr. *Ap-d*'s pretended remarks on that paper, *Nar.* p. 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31. It does not ſeem neceſſary to trouble the publick with anſwers to them. Any intelligent Reader, by comparing them with the Paper itſelf, may ſee they are either miſtakes, or deſigned falſifications, and can do him or his cauſe but little ſervice. As for the mean opinion that Mr. *Ap-d* expreſſes of the Author of that Paper through the whole Narrative, he is perfectly eaſy about it. The eſteem of Mr. *Ap-d* and his friends, could not lift him up, nor is their contempt able to caſt him down. But ſince the Paper and its Author are altogether ſo inſignificant in his view, why did he give himſelf the trouble to ask the peruſual of it? And if ſo ſhort a time to peruſe it was ſufficient, to enable him to anſwer it, and much more, if he was able to anſwer it off-hand; he will now be able to anſwer it effectually, when he has it to peruſe as long as he pleaſes. But then it is enquired, why was not the peruſual of that paper allowed

to

to Mr. *Ap-d* when he made a publick demand of it in the Synod? *Answ.* For two Reasons, chiefly. 1st. The Author had no copy, and he did not think proper to trust the original with Mr. *Ap-d* and his friends. 2dly. The design of asking the perusal of the Paper seem'd to be, that the Synod might be drawn into a publick disputation of our known principles; which is a conduct altogether unprecedented, and highly inconvenient, as it has a tendency to expose Religion, and the doctrines of the Gospel to contempt. Especially when a publick challenge is given by a candidate for the ministry, to a Synod whereof he has a view of being a member, and consequently to which he must be subject, *for the spirits of the Prophets are to be subject to the Prophets*, 1 *Cor.* xii. Such a precedent as this, if allowed, might encourage every proud and giddy person, if he could obtain the honour of being a candidate, to embroil Synods in such disputes and janglings, as would render them contemptible, and spend their whole time of meeting to the great prejudice of the Churches under their inspection.

But then it is inquired, to what purpose were the Scruples of Intrants appointed by the Synod, to be transmitted to the several Presbyteries, if the Doctrines Scrupled were not to be canvassed and publickly debated at the General meeting? To this it is answered, that when that Act was made in 1725 it was chiefly intended to enable the Synod to inspect the conduct of Presbyteries, rather than to satisfy Intrants; this last was thought to be the business of Presbyteries, to which they have more easy access; rather than of the General Synod, that meets but once a year. And at that time it was suspected, that some Presbyteries did, or were ready to, take too great liberty in admitting of Intrants, that entertained Principles inconsistent with the Doctrines of our common Confession. And to prevent the inconveniencies of this conduct of Presbyteries, that act

was

was made; that the whole body of Miniſters might know and be ſatisfied about the Principles of ſuch as ſhould be admitted into our Aſſociation. And it had tended much to our peace and comfort, if this act had been ſooner made or better obſerved. But it was never the deſign of that act, that our Religious Principles ſhould be publickly debated, as Mr. *Ap-d* and his friends ſeemed to expect.

THE Moderator, as is uſual, called ſeveral members of the Synod, to give their opinions, what method of proceeding was proper to be taken, in order to the iſſuing of Mr. *Ap-d*'s affair? In anſwer to which, after ſome others had ſpoke, one member propoſed, that a committee might be appointed to converſe with Mr. *Ap-d* and prepare his affair for the farther conſideration of the Synod. And this being a very rational and chriſtian method, and very much practiſed by numerous aſſemblies, in caſes of any importance or intricacy, was agreed to by the Synod, and there was no great debate about it.

Now in two paragraphs of no great length, Nar. p. 16, 17. the world has a ſufficient ſwatch of Mr. *Ap-d*'s veracity, and his Talent at giving hard names and vile characters, here come in ſuch words as *partiality—no impolitick ſcheme—party zeal, a paper read written with an unchriſtian ſpirit, calculated to prejudice the injudicious hearers, and ſome of the weaker brethren againſt me and my principles——left the Confeſſion loſe any of its credit—unworthy views—managers deſigns——!* Strange what behaviour is here! He ſeems like one playing at blind-man's buff, dealing blows and not knowing who it is that he hits. Pray what unworthy views had Mr. *David Harvey*, one of the now Proteſters, that firſt propoſed this committee? Or the members of the committee that ſeconded his motion, whom he acquits of any ſuch unworthy views or politick deſigns againſt him?

If the ſelect committee had no unworthy views againſt Mr. *Ap-d*, as he ſays (and thereby contradicts himſelf, and inſtead of hurting the reputation of others, hurts his own) neither had the Synod, in appointing that committee. However Mr. *Ap-d* durſt not truſt himſelf with this committee; without two of his truſty friends, viz. Meſſ *Thomas Mc.Clain*, and *John Menagh*, who at his deſire, were allowed to attend him.

When this committee attended the Synod, they Reported, that Mr. *Ap-d* had given Declarations of his ſenſe of the doctrines to which his Scruples referred, in writing under his hand; and that he had declared to them, that he was willing to ſubſcribe the remaining articles of the Confeſſion of Faith, not ſcrupled by him. This Report gave the Synod ſome hope that this affair would be brought to a comfortable iſſue. But when ſaid declarations were read in the Synod, the ſenſe of them appeared to be ſo ambiguous and indeterminate, that perſons of vaſtly different ſentiments, and almoſt of any denomination of chriſtians might ſubſcribe them.

The Declarations here follow.

1. "Magiſtrates ought to be inveſted, with a power "to ſuppreſs blaſphemies, and errors ſubverſive of civil "and religious ſocieties.

But why is it not ſaid they *are*, inſtead of *ought* to be inveſted? If Magiſtrates have their power from God, and be accountable to him for their adminiſtration, it muſt be ſuppoſed that he has appointed their office, and the ends and duties of it; and that they are inveſted by him, with all powers neceſſary for diſcharging the duties and attaining the ends of that office. And this ſeems to be the Apoſtle's ſenſe of the matter, *Rom.* xiii. 1, 3, 4. *There IS no power but of God. The powers that BE are ordained of God Rulers ARE not a terror to good works but to the evil He IS the Miniſter of God to thee for good. He BEARETH not the ſword in vain.* But if Magiſtrates have all their power ſolely from the people; then they are in-

veſted

veſted with no power but what the people pleaſe to give them. And tho' the people may be wrong in not inveſting them with ſuch and ſuch powers, yet they can exerciſe no more power than what they have actually received from the people. This ſeems to be Mr. *Ap-d*'s ſenſe, and that Magiſtrates are obliged to exerciſe their power equally for the protection of Religious Societies, that profeſs true or falſe Religion, without any difference: To defend the impure Synagogue of *Satan*, as much as the pureſt Church of Chriſt upon earth.

2. " Chriſtians are only to hope for ſalvation upon the " Goſpel terms, which are faith in Chriſt, repentance " and obedience to his laws. At the ſame time I know " not but God may ſave ſome that are not within the " Chriſtian Church in a way beſt known to himſelf.

THE Author of this Declaration cannot well be ſuppoſed to be ignorant, that moſt of thoſe who profeſs the Chriſtian Name would readily make the ſame declaration in ſome ſenſe; and yet how differently do they explain each of theſe terms, and in what reſpects they are neceſſary? And how poorly does he come off now, after all his boaſted charity to the heathen world? When he ſays only, I know not but God may ſave them in a way beſt known to himſelf! He ſeems to know as little of the ſalvation of the Heathens, and the way in which they are to be ſaved as other folks do! But the word (way) here is of an ambiguous and uncertain ſignification: For it may be taken either for that ſpecial way, that God has appointed for bringing his people to ſalvation, *viz.* By the righteouſneſs and grace of Jeſus Chriſt: *Who is the way the truth and the life; without whom none can come to the Father*, John xiv. 6. Or for the means of bringing perſons into this way. And the propoſition will have a vaſtly different meaning; according as that word is thus differently underſtood.

3. " REGENERATION is abſolutely neceſſary to our " pleaſing God, ſo as to obtain eternal happineſs."

BUT

BUT according to him, an unregenerate man may pleaſe God in ſome particular actions, and yet not obtain eternal happineſs. See Scruple 3d.

4. "SYNODS and Councils have a right to give their "opinions concerning Controverſies of Faith and Caſes "of Conſcience. At the ſame time their opinions are "not binding upon the Conſciences of others, other-"wiſe than as they are agreeable to the word of God. "I am alſo ſatisfied, that a regard is due to the Miniſtry "as it is an Ordinance of Chriſt."

THIS declaration indeed is capable of a ſound ſenſe, and might paſs better than any of the preceeding. But becauſe in his laſt Scruple he directly oppoſes all Right or Power in Eccleſiaſtical Aſſemblies to judge and cenſure ſuch as corrupt the faith, making the exerciſe of this power inconſiſtent with the Kingly-power of Chriſt, and uſurping Eccleſiaſtical Supremacy, and Lording it over Conſcience; therefore this declaration muſt be underſtood in conſiſtency with that Doctrine; unleſs he expreſly recant.

FOR theſe Reaſons it could not be juſtly expected, that theſe declarations would ſatisfy the Synod, unleſs they had been impoſed upon, and miſtaken the meaning of them. And this is abundantly confirmed by his own authentick explication of them. Nar. p. 19. "I think it neceſſary here to obſerve, that the above "Declarations which ſeemed to give general ſatisfaction "to the Committee either don't come up to the Doc-"trines in the Confeſſion to which they refer, or are "contrary to them." Now let the impartial world take this publick Confeſſion from him, to juſtify the Synod's conduct towards him Indeed he uſes the committee very ill; for if they were generally ſatisfied with theſe declarations, they took them in a different ſenſe from that in which he underſtands them: But it is not likely they were ſo generally ſatisfied as he pretends; for one of the members of the committee declared in the

Synod that he was resolved to enter his dissent from approving them, upon account of their ambiguity, till he heard Mr. *Ap-d* declare that he would subscribe the remaining Articles of the Confession; which he thought would fix the sense of them. And why might not others be of the same mind?

But tho' we allow him to be a good interpreter of his own declarations, we do not allow him to be so of our Confession, when he says *ibid.* "That his second declaration is directly contrary to the doctrine to which "it refers as it stands in the Confession. It owns a possibility of the salvation of some heathens; whereas "the Confession absolutely damns them all." This author is not ashamed to affirm again and again in print what every one may see is evidently false. See the answer to Scruple 2d.

Nor is it any more worthy of credit that he relates p. 20, and 21. *viz.* That upon hearing the Report of the Committee and his declarations being publickly read, the Synod found themselves pinched. "Had they approved the declarations, they would thereby have given up part of the Confession, which they seemed resolved to retain at any Rate; and by rejecting them "as unsatisfactory, they would have contradicted the "judgment of their Select Committee, by whom they "were generally approved, and also have laid themselves "under a necessity of entring into a debate, upon the "Scrupled Doctrines; to extricate themselves out of these "circumstances, they hit upon a lucky Expedient, which "was to withhold their judgment until I should first be "brought into an inquisition, and examined upon what "had no connexion with the point under their consideration, and consequently did not lye before them. "This Inquisitory Discipline they introduced by asking me".——

The main strength of the whole Narrative, as I take it, lyes in this Paragraph; which has been formed

ed upon a review of the arguments and the reaſons of Proteſts offered to the Synod in favour of Mr. *Ap—d*, with ſeveral groundleſs and invidious turns added by him, to embelliſh it and blacken the Synod. Therefore I take leave to offer ſome Remarks upon it. 1ſt. It cannot be ſuppoſed to contribute much to Mr. *Ap-d*'s reputation thus to repreſent the Synod, as a body of men that are both weak and wicked, to render them odious and contemptible to the world, and to publiſh a rediculous ſtory for which there was no real foundation, to reproach them: Saying that they were pinched, and inſinuating that as a company of men groping in the dark, they ſtumbled upon a lucky expedient to extricate themſelves. By this paragraph conſidered as a piece of hiſtory, I ſuppoſe the Author has forfeited the eſteem of a good hiſtorian, with all conſidering and impartial men. The truth of the ſtory is this. The buſineſs of the Synod, and the main point that lay before them was to ſatisfy themſelves, upon ſolid grounds, that Mr. *Ap-d* was ſound in the Faith; as to which he had given them ground to ſuſpect him by his ſcruples. His ambiguous declarations, which either contradicted the Doctrines of the Confeſſion, or did not come up to them, were not looked upon by the Synod as ſufficient to afford them that ſatisfaction. The method which was now propoſed in the Synod, for obtaining it, was the ſame that was pointed out to them by the Report of the Committee, *viz.* To call Mr. *Ap-d*, and ask him, whether he would declare his adherence to, or ſubſcribe the remaining articles of the *Weſtminſter* Confeſſion, not ſcrupled by him, in order to clear their way in judging of his declarations? This motion was ſeconded by a good many members; and the Synod was in no other pinch, but by a violent oppoſition that was given to it by ſome; and the ſtruggle laſted ſome conſiderable time, before the Synod got leave to put the propoſed queſtion to Mr. *Ap-d*.

2*ly*. Mr. *Ap-d* uſes the ſelect Committee little better in this account than the Synod. For having often ſaid that his declarations were generally approved by the Committee; he now tells the world, that if the Synod had approved theſe declarations of his, they would thereby have given up part of their Confeſſion: In which it is implied that all thoſe in the Committee that approved his declarations thereby gave up part of the Confeſſion. But that this is a groundleſs ſuppoſition will appear, if it be duly conſidered, that there is a wide difference between the approbation of a committee, and that of a Synod. The firſt is Preparative, the ſecond is Deciſive; as all know that are acquainted with the nature of ſuch aſſemblies. When a man gives his voice in a committee to approve declarations or propoſitions, it is as much as to ſay, I am content that theſe declarations come before the Synod, to be conſidered and judged of by them, in order to the iſſuing this affair. And if Mr. *Ap-d* had not declared in the committee that he would ſubſcribe the remaining articles of the Confeſſion, his declarations would not have met with ſo general an approbation, even in this ſenſe, from the members of the committee. But when a member of the Synod votes his approbation of ſuch propoſitions, the meaning is, I am ſatisfied that theſe propoſitions have our approbation as true and good. Any one may from hence reaſonably ſuppoſe, that an honeſt man may in many caſes conſcientiouſly approve in a committee, and diſapprove the ſame propſitions in the Synod. And from hence it is evident, that it is no juſt way of reaſoning to ſay; theſe declarations were approved by the committee, therefore they ought to be approved by the Synod. And that if the Synod reject them as unſatisfactory, they contradict the judgment of their ſelect committee.

3*ly*. It is wrong to alledge that Mr. *Ap-d*'s adherence to the remaining articles of the Confeſſion, not ſcrupled,

ſcrupled, had no connexion with his declarations, in relation to the doctrines ſcrupled. For the true determinate meaning of theſe declarations depended upon it. Therefore it lay before the Synod, as a neceſſary prerequiſite to their judging clearly and ſafely of theſe declarations. And the Synod judged that it lay before them; and it was their right ſo to do. Whether was the Synod to judge for themſelves what lay before them; or was Mr. *Ap-d* to judge for them?

4*ly*. It is quite foreign to the preſent Queſtion to plead, as Mr. *Ap-d* does, p. 2. "That it would be thought "highly unreaſonable, in a Civil Judicature to refuſe to "acquit or condemn a priſoner, accuſed of a crime, "until he ſhould firſt clear himſelf of a ſecond, with "which he was never charged." For the caſe of a priſoner at the bar and that of a canditate upon his tryal, are vaſtly different: and an argument from the one caſe to the other does not conclude. Whether a priſoner ſhould clear himſelf of a crime with which he was never charged, is a Point of Law which I will not diſpute with Mr. *Ap-d*. But I ſuppoſe, if a priſoner in cuſtody for a crime whereof he is accuſed, has a 2d laid to his charge, upon which the judgment to be given in relation to the firſt in any meaſure depends, in that caſe it is in the power of the Court to put off his tryal, till he can be tried for both. And this has ſome reſemblance of the Synod's conduct in Mr. *Ap-d*'s caſe. However 'tis not juſt to condemn a priſoner for any crime, till it be proved upon him by competent witneſſes. But it is no injuſtice to a candidate, to refuſe him the office, or privilege he ſtands for, unleſs he gives ſufficient proof that he has the qualifications upon which his right to ſaid office or privilege depends. Mr. *Ap-d*'s ſoundneſs in the Faith was the qualification required, and the Synod had a right to try it, by requiring his ſenſe of the remaining Articles; becauſe it was required in the committee, and becauſe it was alledged in the Synod that

ſome

ſome of the reaſons offered by him, to ſupport his Scruples, oppoſed ſome articles of the Confeſſion not ſcrupled.

5ly. ANOTHER charge brought againſt the Synod is, "that they ſeemed reſolved not to part with that part of the Confeſſion Mr. *Ap-d* ſcrupl'd at any Rate: And why ſhould they not? Such a reſolution well became them, and they had good authority for it, *Prov.* xxiii. 23. *Buy the truth and ſell it not.* But Mr. *Ap-d* ſeem'd very fond to have it given up, but the reaſons he offered were not ſufficient to convince them, that it was their duty to part with it. 'Tis not ſufficient for him to inſinuate, that the Synod had no reaſon to retain their Confeſſion; this muſt be proved, if he would do his buſineſs to purpoſe.

6ly, BUT the moſt unpardonable Crime that Mr. *Ap-d* charges upon the Synod is, that they brought him into an Inquiſition, and laid him under Inquiſitory Diſcipline. In anſwer to which I would obſerve, 1. That a Presbytery or a Synod concerned in the admiſſion of an Intrant, have a Right to know his ſenſe of thoſe religious Principles they have undertaken by their voluntary Aſſociation to defend. Since they are accountable to the world for him and his religion when admitted, it is their Right to know what it is, before they give him the right hand of fellowſhip. The Apoſtle *Paul* and his companion *Barnabas* went up to *Jeruſalem*, and communicated to the other Apoſtles, in a conference held for that purpoſe, that Goſpel which they preached among the *Gentiles.* And when theſe Apoſtles had received ample ſatisfaction concerning it, they gave them the right hands of fellowſhip, and chearfully received them as Brethren, *Gal.* ii. *v.* 2, 7, 9. compared. From whence it appears, that Presbyteries and Synods have a right to know the religion of Intrants, before they admit them. And if it be their right to know it, it is alſo their duty to inquire into it; and of ſuch Intrants to give them ſatisfaction a-

bout

bout it, by communicating their ſentiments concerning the Chriſtian Religion to them, when required. Such Conduct is not only moſt reaſonable in the nature of the thing, but it is alſo founded on a Divine Warrant and Inſtitution; as may be inferred from theſe two teſtimonies of Scripture. The Apoſtle *Paul's* 1 *Ep.* to *Tim.* v. 22. *Lay hands ſuddenly on no man, neitheir be partaker of other mens ſins:* They that ordain a Miniſter before they hold a ſtrict Inquiry into his Religion and Principles lay hands ſuddenly on him, and run the hazzard of partaking of his ſins. Ep. to *Titus* i. 9. *Holding faſt the faithful word, as he hath been taught; that he may be able by ſound doctrine, both to exhort and convince the gain-ſayers.* Where the Apoſtle gives it as a neceſſary qualification of one that is to be ordained a miniſter of the Goſpel, that he hold faſt the true and ſound doctrine taught in Scripture. And thence it appears to be the duty of thoſe that are to ordain him, and receive him into their communion, carefully to inquire what doctrines he holds. And it is his duty to be open and free with them upon that head.

But if a Candidate does not really believe the doctrines maintained and profeſſed by the Church or aſſociated body, whereof he ſeeks to be a member; or if he entertains principles and opinions that are everſive of them; and at the ſame time endeavours to palm himſelf upon them, keeping upon the reſerve as to his real ſentiments: He is really impoſing upon their conſciences, invading their juſt Rights, undermining the Religion they have united for the profeſſion and defence of: And attempting to ſubvert the ſouls of the people under their inſpection. And if they reject him upon his refuſing to declare himſelf for their ſatisfaction, he has no cauſe to complain or appeal to the world of any injurious treatment received from them in that reſpect. All the injurious treatment, in this caſe, is given by him to them, and not received from them. Thus it appears that

there

there is a lawful, reaſonable, Chriſtian Inquiſition appointed by the Lord Chriſt in his Church.

2. But perhaps Mr. *Ap-d* by Inquiſition here meant a *Spaniſh* one; or ſomething like that deſcribed by Mr. *Antonio Gavin* in his Maſter-key to Popery: A thing moſt horrible and ſhocking to Human Nature. And it ſeems the rather to be underſtood in this ſenſe, becauſe there are abundance of equivalent terms interſperſed in ſeveral parts of his paper; ſuch as, *uſurping Eccleſiaſtical Supremacy. Lording it over Conſcience. The High Party in the Synod*, &c. which might bring people in mind of *High Altar. High Maſs. High Commiſſion Court*; and ſuch other appendages of *Romiſh* Tyranny and Superſtition. It is then a heavy charge of Popery and Perſecution, laid againſt the Synod: And to ſet it home to the beſt advantage, he borrows the frightful Idea of the Inquiſition, to ſhew the Synod in to the world, that he might move Horror and Indignation in the hearts of all people againſt them; not only as blind bigots, that would retain their Confeſſion at any rate; but alſo as a ſet of inhuman and barbarous Inquiſitors.

Tho' this objection againſt the Synod is but *Inſinuated* by Mr. *Ap-d*, yet he often returns to it, and ſeems to lay the Streſs of his cauſe upon it. And if ſuch hints as he has given be urged in converſation with the Art and Elegance of ſome *Engliſh* Writers, who have laboured this point to the utmoſt advantage; they will ſeldom fail to make great impreſſions on ſuch as are not prepared to ſtand the attack. And ſince this evil came from South-*Britain* to us, it may be thought reaſonable to fetch the Remedy from thence. Therefore I beg leave to commit this Important ſervice to a Maſterly Hand, who is likely to diſcharge it to purpoſe, by introduceing the learned and celebrated Dr. *Waterland* to anſwer for us. In the ſame Treatiſe which was recommended in the Anſwer to the Scruples, p. 191— His words are theſe.

"It

" It has been sometimes invidiously suggested, that " our zeal and constancy in contending so earnestly for " what we call FAITH, is bearing hard upon our Chris- " tian Brethren, of an opposite persuasion, is afflicting " and oppressing them, and in short, is Persecution and " Popery. It can scarcely be conceived that any sensi- " ble men should seriously advance such odd Fancies, " or that they mean any thing more by them, than " Rhetorication and Flourish. Yet certain it is, that " such things have been offered with a serious Air, and " by men of no mean Parts: I shall give some ex- " amples. One writes thus, *The Humour of Creed-making* " *and Creed-imposing, is one of the most grievous Instances* " *of Persecution, and the Grand Source of every other kind* " *of it. If it be only their good Opinion of us, that our* " *Fellow-Christians suspend upon our non-assent to their Con-* " *fessions of Faith, they in a very inhuman and unchri-* " *stian way persecute us.*——*It is in itself barbarous,* " *says Mr.* Marvel, *for these Faith-stretchers, whosoever* " *they be, to put mens Consciences upon the Torture, and* " *to rack them to the length of their own Notions. Occa-* " *sional Paper, Vol. 2. No* 1. *p.* 12, *&c.* This Decla- " matory Talk has been gravely, solidly and satisfacto- " rily answered by a very good writer, *Preface to the* " *Westminster Confession,* p. 96—104. And yet the " Objector chose rather to declaim again upon the same " head, for several Pages together, than to quit his " false Reasonings, or acknowledge his Mistakes. *De-* " *fence of the Scripture as the only Standard of Faith, by* " *the Author of the Occasional Paper,* p. 35.—40. To " say the best of it, it is a very wanton way of talking, " in a Subject of the last Importance, and is making a " Jest of the Liberties of Mankind here, and of their " Happiness hereafter. If those Gentlemen have been so " *Inhumanly* and *Barbarously* persecuted, how is it that " they have not yet assumed the Title of *Martyrs* or " *Confessors?* For *Persecution* and *Martyrdom* are a kind

" of Correlates, which ſuppoſe and imply each other.
" And what is that *Inhuman* Torture, that *Barbarous*
" Perſecution which they have endured? Have they
" had Tryal of *cruel mockings* and *Scourgings*, of *Bonds*
" and *Impriſonments*? Have they wandered about in *Sheep-*
" *ſkins* or *Goat-ſkins*, in *Dens* or *Caves* of the Earth,
" for the ſake of *Truth* or *Godlineſs*? No, but good
" Chriſtians have *ſuſpended* their good opinion of them,
" that is the Grievance. And for what? Not for think-
" ing as they pleaſe (for Thoughts are free) but for O-
" vert-acts of *Hereſy* or perhaps *Blaſphemy*; for making
" *publick* Appeals to the People, in order to draw them
" off from liſtening to their better Guides, to ſeduce
" them from the Faith they have been Baptized into, and
" to *Impoſe* upon them ſuch Doctrines as muſt endanger
" their everlaſting Salvation. The kind and charitable
" endeavours of good Men, whoſe province it is to pre-
" vent ſuch fatal miſchiefs, in the mildeſt and gentleſt
" way, (ſuch as Chriſt himſelf has preſcribed) Theſe
" are the *Inhuman* and *Unchriſtian* Perſecutions which
" thoſe Gentlemen complain of. But to be a little
" more particular. They muſt not take it amiſs to be
" told, in return to their odd complaint. 1ſt. That
" they are guilty of a moſt intollerable Abuſe of words
" and names, in ſpeaking of RACK, TORTURE
" and PERSECUTION, (and I add INQUISITI-
" ON) where, even by their own account, there is
" not ſo much as a Semblance of them. For it amounts
" after all, only to the *ſuſpending* our *good opinion* of
" them. 2. In this way of giving *new* and *wrong*
" Names to Things, they may, if they pleaſe, make
" the primitive Churches alſo, and Martyrs, yea, and
" Chriſt and his Apoſtles *Perſecutors*: For they ſuſpend-
" ed their good opinion of Unbelievers. 3. The Pri-
" mitive Diſcipline, by their account, will be, moſt of
" it, *Perſecution*; and ſo inſtead of ten *Heathen* Perſecu-
" tions (as they are commonly reckoned) they may in-

" creaſe

" creaſe the Number of Perſecutions, to five hundred
" or more, and call them *Chriſtian* Perſecutions, or ra-
" ther, *Unchriſtian* ones, for, THAT, it ſeems is the
" Name for them. 4. It is wrong in theſe Gentle-
" men to furniſh the Papiſts with freſh Topicks for *real*
" Perſecution. For ſince it will follow from this Ac-
" count that Perſecution is Scripture Doctrine, it may
" be pleaded, that Papal *Perſecutions* differ in *Kind* on-
" ly or *Degree* from the other; but in the main are
" warranted by the New Teſtament itſelf, and by
" the univerſal Practice of the Church in the beſt and
" pureſt Ages. 5. This will likewiſe be furniſhing
" Infidels with new Arguments againſt Chriſtianity, as
" it is a Perſecuting Religion: For it is certain, that
" the pretended Perſecution here complained of, is ſuch
" as Scripture itſelf preſcribes, as I have before proved.
" 6. But to come yet cloſer up to theſe Complainers,
" let it be conſidered, whether they are not themſelves
" the real PERSECUTORS, guilty of that very
" Crime which they charge upon the Churches of God?
" To revile Men for doing their bounden Duty, to load
" them with *Reproaches* for *Righteouſneſs* ſake, (and to
" Scoff and Ridicule them) to *Libel* and *Defame* them,
" for maintaining the *Faith* of Chriſt in a Chriſtian way,
" to *ſeduce* their Flocks from them, and to demand,
" at the ſame time, to be carreſſed and honoured as *Fel-*
" *low-Chriſtians*: Theſe are grievous *Impoſitions* and *Op-*
" *preſſions*, and may amount to a degree of Perſecution
" properly ſo called. They that refuſe to conform to
" Order, who ſubmit not to *ſound* words and *wholeſome*
" *Doctrine*, who give unneceſſary Diſturbance, and aſ-
" ſume more than belongs to them: They are the in-
" vaders of Liberty, the *oppreſſors* and *Perſecutors* of
" Religious and righteous men.

" IT will be ſaid perhaps, that *Creed-makers* and
" *Creed-Impoſers*, as ſuch, aſſume more than belongs to
" them. But if that be a Fault it is a Fault common

" to all Parties: For they who impugn the great Doc-
" trines of the Church, are themſelves as much *Creed-*
" *makers*, and *Creed-Impoſers*, by their *Appeals* to the
" People, and by their *impoſing* their own Doctrines on
" the Publick, in a *clamourous way* (and generally with
" *Satyr* and invective upon all that diſlike them) as o-
" thers are, who impoſe them in a more regular and Au-
" thoritative manner. Much has been ſaid againſt *Creed-*
" *making* by many who have as long *Creeds* as others;
" only not the ſame Creeds. And who are as confident
" in Dictating, and as Dogmatical in defining, and as ea-
" ger to impoſe their own Sentiments, as it is poſſible
" for men to be. The Queſtion properly is not, whe-
" ther there ſhall be Creeds or no; For all Parties are
" for them (the *Scepticks* not excepted, who are as cre-
" dulous as other men, frequently more ſo) under one
" ſhape or other, and ever will be: But the real matter
" in Controverſy is, who ſhall have the *Drawing* of them,
" or who ſhall *impoſe* them? And when men declaim a-
" gainſt *impoſing* of Creeds, the ſecret meaning of all
" ſeems to be, that they would not have ſuch a Power
" or Privilege lodged in any hands but their own. How-
" ever the Fault lies not in impoſing Creeds (where there
" is a competent Authority) but in impoſing *falſe* Doc-
" trine for *true*; and therefore the complaint is wide
" while it runs only in general, againſt all *Creed-making*
" and againſt *Impoſitions* at large, eſpecially as practiſed
" in the Proteſtant Churches. We pretend not to im-
" poſe Articles of Faith in an *arbitrary* manner, or to re-
" quire any Implicit Belief in the *Church*: We require
" no man to receive them for *true* becauſe they are *ours*,
" but becauſe they carry their *Evidences* along with them
" and will bear *Examining*.

" BUT it will be ſaid, that the Proteſtant Churches
" however, do determine before hand, that every Per-
" ſon upon Examination, *ought* to find thoſe things true
" which they have formed into *Creeds* or *Articles*. They

" do

" do ſo, as to the main Things at leaſt, and where is the
" harm? It is no more than preſuming that there are
" ſome things ſo *Certain*, that the Reaſon of Mankind
" ought to ſubmit to them, and that thoſe things which
" they have defined are of that Number. Let *Euclides*
" Propoſitions, or an account carefully caſt up and prov-
" ed, by the never-failing Rules of Art, be given into
" any man's hand to examine, there will be no Preſump-
" tion in telling him before hand, that he will find them
" *true* upon a due Examination: And if he afterwards
" pretends to have found Errors in them, it will be no
" breach of charity or of good manners to tell him, the
" Errors are his own, and that either he has not duly
" examined them, or is not ſincere in his Report, or la-
" bours under an Incapacity. The ſame may be ſaid of
" many caſes of moral certainty, which are ſo plain that
" a man may have as well grounded an aſſurance there
" as any where: Such as the Truth of Chriſtianity in
" general, and many particular Doctrines, in Creeds and
" Confeſſions, that have ſuch a degree of Moral Evi-
" dence to recommend and atteſt them, that it may be
" ſafely ſaid, the Reaſon of Mankind *ought* to *receive*
" them. Reaſon is Reaſon in every man, the humane
" Faculties are true, and there is ſuch a thing as *Moral*
" *Certainty* which is ground ſufficient for Church-guides
" to reſt their own Faith upon, and to hold out their
" Light to others, committed to their Charge, and for
" whom they are ſo far reſponſible. Now impoſing
" ſuch Doctrines in this manner is not in them aſſum-
" ing what does not belong to them, but *diſcharging* a
" weighty Truſt repoſed in them. Upon the whole
" there is neither *Popery*, nor *Perſecution*, (I add nor
" *Spaniſh Inquiſition*,) merely in impoſing Creeds and
" Confeſſions, under pain of Church Cenſurers, or Ex-
" cluſion from the Miniſterial Function: But there is
" good Order and Diſcipline in it, ſuch as Chriſt and
" his Apoſtles have commanded, and the Church in the

" beſt

" beſt and pureſt Ages has obſerved, and ſuch as is ne-
" ceſſary to keep the unity of the Faith in the Bond of
" Peace."——Thus Dr. *Waterland.*

To return now to the Proceedings of the Synod. The Moderator in purſuance of a Motion that had been made, and vigorouſly oppoſed, but was ſtill inſiſted on, called Mr *Ap-d* with a view to ask him, whether he was willing to ſubſcribe the remaining Articles of the Weſtminſter Confeſſion, againſt which he had offered no Scruples? Mr. *Ap-d* being called, did not appear, for ſome time: Some ſaid he was gone out. In the mean time, ſome Members continued preſſing the Synod to wave that Queſtion, and to proceed to conſider his Declarations: Alledging that there was no neceſſity for requiring a Publick Declaration from himſelf in the Synod touching the Remaining Articles, ſince he had ſatisfied the Committee upon that head; and that it was uſing the Committee ill to require it of him. But their importunity not prevailing, Mr. *Ap-d* appeared. And the Mod--r told him in the name of the Synod, that tho' they did not Queſtion the Report given by the Committee, yet to give them clearneſs in Judging of his Declarations, they deſired to know whether he was willing to declare his aſſent, or adherence, to the Articles of the Confeſſion not ſcrupled by him? To which after ſome complaint about ſuſpecting his ſincerity, he anſwered in expreſs terms " I have ſatisfied the Committee laſt
" Night, and am of the ſame opinion this Morning: If
" this do not afford Satisfaction to the Synod, I have
" no more to ſay; for no other anſwer will I give, and
" no other Queſtion will I anſwer." Upon this the Debate was reſumed in the Synod: And after long reaſoning, and ſome warmth on both Sides, ſome Members began to ſpeak of forming Reſolutions upon the whole affair, to bring it to a concluſion. But at that time the Animoſity was carried ſo high, that it was plain to all, that no Reſolution could be formed, that would be a-

greed

greed to by the Synod without a Vote. And then it began to be enquired, what ſhould be the State of the Vote. The firſt that was entered into the minutes was this, or to this effect, *viz.* Whether the Synod ſhall give their Judgment concerning Mr. *Ap-d*'s Declarations, and declare their Satisfaction with them, provided he afterwards ſatisfy them concerning his willingneſs to ſubſcribe the remaining articles, not ſcrupled by him, or not? Upon propoſing that ſtate of the Vote, it was obſerved by ſome members, *that the Synod had not as yet received Satisfaction concerning Mr.* Ap-d's *ſoundneſs in the Faith.* And this propoſition is written along with this State of the Vote, in the minutes. I do not ſuppoſe that it is any part of the Propoſition that was firſt offered for the State of the Vote, but that it was added to it by way of amendment. This State of the Vote being oppoſed, another was offered; which was to this Effect, viz. Whether the Synod ſhall Inſiſt that Mr. *Ap-d* ſhall firſt ſatisfy them, as to his willingneſs to ſubſcribe the remaining Articles of the Confeſſion, not ſcrupled by him, before they Judge or approve of his Declarations, in relation to the Doctrines Scrupled, or not? When both theſe were debated, and neither of them could be agreed to by the Synod; the queſtion was put whether the firſt or the ſecond ſhall be the State of the Vote? And it carried in favour of the ſecond, by plurality of voices. Againſt this vote four Miniſters, Mr. *Ap-d* ſays, proteſted, whoſe Names he has publiſhed with the Reaſons of their Proteſtation.

'Tis indeed the Right of every Member of ſuch a Judicature, to enter his Proteſt in the Records, againſt any matter of Importance, that is carried againſt his Judgment; but it is not ſo uſual to publiſh this by way of appeal to the world: And when that is done, any other member of the ſame Judicature, has the ſame Right to publiſh his Anſwer to it. The majority have at leaſt

as

as good a claim to ſtand fair in the eyes of the world as the minority have.

THE Reaſons of their Proteſts here follow with Remarks upon them.

Reaſon 1ſt. "BECAUSE Mr. *William Boyd*'s looking "about, when the two States of the Vote were put, "and ſaying, *This is our State of the Vote*, had a tenden- "cy to influence ſome of the Members."

This Reaſon is illuſtrated with a modeſt and ingenious Commentary thus, "As if Mr. *Boyd* had ſaid, My Bre- "thren, I'm ſenſible many of you are not capable to "determine which ſtate of the Vote is moſt reaſonable. "At the ſame time, I doubt not but you are very well "diſpos'd implicitly to follow me and my Party. I there- "fore think it proper to let you know, that the ſecond "is the true, orthodox and our ſtate of the Vote."

Rem. As to the Reaſon of the Proteſt, it ſeems to be moſt trifling. If Proteſts were to be given in upon ſuch Reaſons, the world would be burdened with them. Who hindered the Proteſters to look about and ſay in their turn, *this is our State?* Some of them did and ſaid things much more culpable in the Synod.

BUT as for this Sample of Mr. *Ap-d*'s diſpoſition and Abilities I ſhall not offer the leaſt remark upon it, but leave it to the judgment of the impartial world, as he has done. If he has gained any Repution to himſelf, or Intereſt to his cauſe by it, much good may it do him.

Reaſon 2d. "BECAUSE the firſt ſtate of the Vote "was carried by a conſiderable majority of Miniſters, "who muſt be ſuppoſed to be better qualified than the "other Members, to Judge in ſuch Matters."

Rem. 1ſt. THIS was alledged by ſome of the Proteſters, but it was not proved. 2. There was no Difficulty in the Vote, which any man of the weakeſt capacity in the Synod was not able to underſtand. The main difficulty was to judge, whether it was moſt reaſonable that the Synod ſhould involve themſelves in Judging of

Mr.

Mr. *Ap-d*'s uncertain declarations, before he had brought the ſenſe of them to a determinate certainty, or that Mr. *Ap-d* ſhould find the ſenſe of them by declaring his aſſent to the remaining articles before they would proceed to Judge them. 3. If this was a Difficulty to any Member it was explained by long Reaſoning before the Vote was put. 4. This vote was carried by the elders. Be it ſo. The Synod and all the Chriſtian People under their Inſpection, are the more obliged to them. This is not the only piece of good ſervice they have done. And it ſhews the Excellency of our Conſtitution; where ſuch Elders are members of all Eccleſiaſtical Judicatures: And they are a proper Ballance upon Miniſters, who ſometimes need one as well as other men. Let ſuch as rule well in Synods and Presbyteries be accounted worthy of double honour.

Reaſon 3. "BECAUSE Mr. *Ap-d* having in compliance with the appointment of the Synod, declared his "ſenſe of thoſe Doctrines, to which his Scruples refer, "had a right to know whether that ſenſe gave ſatisfaction to the Synod, before any other Demands could of "Right be made."

Rem. 1ſt. IT was the Synod's Right to determine what they would or could with ſafety do, and not Mr. *Ap-d*'s, nor the Minority's to determine for them? 2. Was it in complyance with the Synod's appointment that he gave Ambiguous Declarations? 3. The ſenſe that Mr. *Ap-d* gave of the Doctrines referred to, was, that he either contradicted or evaded them, as he has publickly owned to the world. And if the Synod had approved his Declarations, as they ſtood, they had thereby given up part of their Confeſſion; and if they had rejected them as unſatisfactory, they had involved themſelves in a Publick Debate about their avowed Principles; which did not tend to the honour of the Synod, or the Intereſt of Religion. Therefore Mr. *Ap-d* had no right to have his

Declarations conſidered, till he ſhould have ſubſcribed the remaining articles.

Reaſon 4. "BECAUSE that great numbers both of "Miniſters and others waited to know whether the Sy- "nod would accept of Mr. *Ap-d*'s Declarations as ſatis- "factory, or if they would pin him down to the Letter "of the Confeſſion."

Rem. 1. Perhaps ſome of them waited for our going wrong, and we are glad that they were diſappointed. 2. All of them found that the Synod was reſolved to abide by the Senſe and Doctrine of our Confeſſion, whatever ſhould become of the Letters and Syllables of it. 3. The Synod was not to take their Meaſures by the unknown, uncertain, unreaſonable Expectations of People; but by the known, Reaſonable, Invariable Rules of Duty, preſcribed and known by Scripture and Reaſon. 4. Did theſe Miniſters or others expect that the Synod would ſuffer Mr. *Ap-d* to pin them down to the letter of his Declarations that either contradicted the Doctrines of the Confeſſion or did not come up to them? 5. If the diſappointment of peoples Expectations were a ſufficient reaſon of proteſt and appeals to the world upon ſuch proteſts; there would be too many of them; for hardly any vote paſſes in a Synod, but ſome or other is diſappointed of his expectations in it.

Reaſon 5. "BECAUSE Intrants, if that method had "been come into, which we reaſoned for, would have "known what treatment they might expect, and a good "deal of future trouble to the Synod in affairs of this "nature would be prevented."

Rem. 1. INTRANTS know much better, as the caſe ſtands, what treatment they are to expect; for now we ſtand to our avowed Doctrines, and the Rules of good order already agreed upon: But if we had departed from theſe, no body could tell what we would next have fallen upon, or what treatment Intrants might expect from us. 2. All Judicatures ought to be very cautious, leſt

they

they give Precedents, that may be prejudicial and destructive to their good order in time coming. And it is but a poor Reason of Protest, that a new Precedent was not obtained at this time. 3. If any thing in the world is likely to create future trouble to the Synod, and all concerned in it, departing from the Truths of God, and the Rules of good order established by our Lord Jesus Christ, is likely to be that thing. 4. If we meet with troubles in future time, as our Brethren seem to threaten us, for holding fast such things as we think our selves in conscience obliged to hold fast, we hope that our Lord and Master will be with us in these troubles, and enable us to bear them patiently. 5. A just Reason of Protest should be founded on something past, or present; but not upon future contingences; unless the Protestors had the spirit of Prophecy.

Reason 6. "BECAUSE by the conduct of the Synod, "the most Effectual Discouragement is given to all "free Enquiry into matters of a Religious Nature; and "Candidates for the Ministry are laid under the strong-"est temptations to Hipocrisy and Dissimulation."

Rem. 1. THE Synod by holding fast the Doctrines and Precepts of the *Westminster* Confession, as true and good, have given no discouragement to any commendable or profitable Inquiries into Religion, but have given the most effectual encouragement to Candidates, and all others to study these sound doctrines, and Inquire into them, for their improvement in knowledge and virtue; that they may become able Divines, and good Christians. But if they had given them up, that would have been the most effectual Discouragment to all men ever after to trouble their heads about them. If any assembly of learned men that are greatly respected in the world, should define *Euclid*'s Propositions to be true to Demonstration, would that discourage any man or men to study them, and Inquire into the truth of them, for their pleasure or improvement in useful knowledge? No,

it would greatly encourage them to it. 2. Free inquiry into matters of a religious nature has been the cry and pretence of Scepticks and Infidels, especially of late times. We charitably suppose that christian Ministers understand something else by such Language than that sort of people do. And they would do well to let the world know what it is that they mean by it; both for their own sake, that they may distinguish themselves from those already mentioned, and for the sake of others, lest Candidates or private Christians by fatal mistake may lose their usefulness in this world, and their happiness in the next. 3. If by a Free inquiry into matters of Religion be understood calling the great Fundamental doctrines of Religion into question, or suspending Belief of Mysterious Doctrines Revealed in the Scriptures, because the manner of them is not revealed to us, and cannot be comprehended by us; or if it be seeking after any other rule of knowledge and practice, than the Inspired writings of the Old and New Testament, or any other Foundation of Faith, hope and comfort for guilty corrupted Sinners, than Christ crucified; then we are joyful that any thing in our Power would give an effectual discouragement to it. 4. If candidates be always seeking and enquiring after truth, and never able to come to any fixed Principles, that they can abide by the faith and profession of, it is our humble opinion, that they are unqualified to be Ministers of the Gospel; for such Ministers hold fast the Faithful Word of sound Doctrine they are taught in the Scriptures. *Tit.* i. 9. Such unlimited and Doubtful Inquiries would end in Doubtful Disputations, to the prejudice of truth and peace. And would be inconsistent with ordination vows, and solemn Declarations. Prov. xx. 25. *It is a Snare to the man who devoureth that which is holy, and after vows to make Inquiry.* Therefore it will be no detriment to Religion, or the Church of God, that they be discouraged. 5. If Candidates will give way to Temptations

that

that incline them to Hypocriſy and Diſſimulation, becauſe we require them to be ſound in the Faith, and to witneſs a good confeſſion of it; we are ſorry for it, but cannot help it: And we hope that all judicious and impartial men will juſtifie our conduct, and that the great Maſter of the Vineyard will not condemn us for it. But that by our excluding from our communion ſuch as refuſe to ſatisfie us, that they are ſound in the Faith, any perſons in the world are laid under the *Strongeſt Temptations* to Hypocriſy and Diſſimulation, is ſurely a miſtake in our Proteſting Brethren: For the *Strongeſt Temptations* that perſons are laid under to ſin ariſe, not from God, nor from other men, acting in obedience to God; but from themſelves, as is evident from *James* i. 13, 14. *Let no man ſay, when he is tempted, I am tempted of God*; — But every man is *tempted, when he is drawn away of his own luſt and enticed.* In particular the *Strongeſt Temptations* that are likely to expoſe any Candidates, to the dreadful hazard of falling into the ſins of Hypocriſy and Diſſimulation muſt ariſe, not from our diſcharging our conſciences towards God in dealing with them, but from ſomething in themſelves: Such as, their Pride and Selfiſhneſs, their Eſtrangement from Practical Religion, their too great attachment to the things of this world, their Affectation of Novelty, and deſpiſing the good old way, their want of a good Foundation of True Learning and Solidity of Judgment, to enable them to ſee into the crafty arts and falſe reaſonings of Seducers, and their ſlight eſteem of and unacquaintedneſs with the Inſpired Writings of the Prophets and Apoſtles. But if our Brethren ſtill inſiſt, that it is our conduct that expoſes Candidates to ſuch Temptations, let them ſhew us a Remedy, if they can, that will not be abundantly worſe than the Diſeaſe they complain of.

Reaſ. 7. "Becauſe the Synod has gone beyond the "Rigour of the act made in 1725, which enjoins no-"thing more than that the Scruples propoſed be laid

"befo[re]

" before them, in order to their being conſidered by " them".

Rem. 1ſt. If ſuch Scruples are to be conſidered by them, they muſt be laid before them, with the reaſons offered to explain and ſupport them. For I ask what Determinate Idea any Judicature could have of a Scruple offered againſt any Doctrine or Propoſition, if it had not the leaſt Reaſon given for it? In that caſe there is nothing ſet in view before them, but the Doctrine ſcrupled and that ſuch a man does not agree to that Doctrine but upon what grounds and conſiderations he differs in opinion from it, there is no light given: And ſo they muſt be utterly at a loſs to know, what is proper to be ſaid in order to ſatisfie him, or what Judgment they ſhall form concerning him. 2. That act was explained, by the Synod at *Antrim*, to intend the Reaſons as well as the Scruples in Mr. *Ap-d*'s Caſe, and no proteſt was entered againſt that Explication; and that was ſufficient to juſtifie the Synod at *Dungannon*. And to ſhew that they did not go beyond the ſenſe and deſign of the Act; and therefore did not go beyond the Act. 3. By the expreſs Letter of the Act, the Scruples of Intrants were put into the Synod's Power, to judge and determine concerning them the beſt they could; otherwiſe to what purpoſe was the Act made? 4. Theſe ſeem to be hard words from Members of the Synod. One act is ſaid to have Rigour in it, and another act to go beyond that Rigour.

Reaſ. 8. " Lastly, Becauſe a tedious and laboured " Anſwer to Mr. *Ap-d*'s Reaſons for his Scruples, ſtuff- " ed with ill-natured inſinuations, was read, with a view, " as appeared to us, to prejudice the Audience againſt " him; and tho' he earneſtly deſired to have the peru- " ſal of that Paper for twelve hours, or if that would " not be granted, that it might be read Paragraph " by Paragraph, that he might have an opportunity to

" make

" make an off-hand reply, yet neither of these requests " were granted.

Rem. 1st. The Reasons why neither of these Requests could be complyed with have been in part already given. 2. We cannot see any convincing Reason in this, why the Synod should not have voted the second Proposition to be the state of the main question in Mr. *Ap-d*'s case. 3. The Paper containing Mr. *Ap-d*'s Scruples and Reasons supporting them, being a scandalous Libel exhibited against the avowed Principles and Publick Confession of this Associated Body of Ministers and Christians, in pursuance of the Rules of good order, was read, in a numerous and mixed Audience; therefore Reason and Equity required, that something should be offered, upon the Spot, in opposition to it, to take off the injurious impressions that might be left upon the minds of any, by such an unfair, Invidious and Defamatory Paper: And since Mr. *Ap-d* was the Libeller, or accuser, it could not consist with Common Justice, that he should be allowed the last word in the Debate; for which he and his Friends so vigorously contended. This Reason was offered in the Synod, to justify that Part of their conduct, tho' it has not been taken notice of by our Protesting Brethren.

But after all, considering these Reasons, as offered against the Decision that carried the second Proposition, to be the State of the main Question, in issuing Mr. *Ap-d*'s affair; and considering it is still uncertain whether that Question would be carried in the affirmative or the negative; the Intelligent Reader, by a little attention, may see how foreign all or most of these Reasons are to the purpose Intended.

To enforce these Reasons of Protestation, Mr. *Ap-d* observes, " That the Gentlemen Protestors having of- " fered them, the Synod was applied to, to review their " conduct, not to proceed upon the measures proposed, " to make no consideration foreign to their proper busi-

" ness,

" neſs, a pretence of departing from it. It was all in " vain, (ſaith he) they had already ſucceeded well in " voting, and they were reſolved to try it again. The " Elders, moſt of them, were their faithful Friends, and " they did not doubt of being ſupported by them." Here is an Invidious Repreſentation of the Synod; as if a great number of them were obſtinately partial, and deſigning men, that would make a thing foreign to their buſineſs a pretence for departing from it, and the reſt of them weak and Ignorant men, that were led aſtray by the former, and would lend them their votes to ſupport them, in proſecution of their unrighteous deſigns. In oppoſition to which I would Remark: 1. That it muſt be no ordinary ſtock of aſſurance that ſupported this Author in repreſenting, that his ſubſcribing the remaining articles of the Confeſſion, was a conſideration foreign to the proper buſineſs of the Synod; when the ſame man tells the world, p. 32, 33. " That the Committee had " informed themſelves of his willingneſs to ſubſcribe that " part of the Confeſſion not ſcrupled, and reported to " the Synod their Satisfaction with him upon that head." Since the Committee thought it proper, to ask him for their ſatisfaction whether he would ſubſcribe that part of the Confeſſion or not, and were ſatisfied with him upon his promiſe to do it, and reported to the Synod that their ſatisfaction with him ſtood on that bottom; was it not then the proper buſineſs of the Synod to ask him whether he would perform his promiſe made to the Committee or not, in order to their being ſatisfied with him likewiſe. And when he abſolutely refuſed to anſwer that Queſtion to the Synod, how could they, or the members of the Committee themſelves, be ſatisfied with him? 2. I would ask Mr. *Ap-d*, or any man that pleaſes to anſwer for him, when a Synod find themſelves divided upon a point, which they have under conſideration and are to determine, whether he can teach them any other poſſible way to come to a determination

of

of it but by a vote? And whether does their voting in that case proceed from Reason and Judgment, or from Ignorance and Partiality as Mr. *Ap-d* suggests? When a Member gives his vote upon any Question, that is proposed to be voted, he gives his Judgment upon it; and there is no other way of knowing the Judgment of the majority, when the Synod is divided. 3. Again I would ask, when the Synod has unanimously agreed without one contradicting voice, to determine a debated Point by a vote, whether in that case, it would be honourable, upright or justifiable conduct in them upon an application made to that purpose, to decline voting, and to hearken to councils that would draw them aside into some other measures? Or whether such conduct would not appear to the Impartial and Judicious part of Mankind, to be partial, unjustifiable and sinful? Now this was the very case of the Synod, when Mr. *Ap-d* says they were applyed to not to proceed to vote. For the previous Question was voted, and every man that gave his vote upon it thereby agreed that the main Point should be determined by a vote. And what should the state of that Question be, but that which was determined by the Majority? Hence it is evident that the Synod's conduct, for which Mr. *Ap-d* here reproaches them, was reasonable and Impartial; and yet his reproaching them for it must proceed from Partiality and Ignorance, or Malice. A partial man is against voting, when the vote is like to run against himself, and would have the Synod led wrong, that he might appear to be in the right. 4. If the Elders were faithful Friends to the Ministers, it was for the Truth's sake, and because they were convinced that they were in the right, and that was no dishonour to them. 5. It is false in fact, that these Reasons of Protestation thus drawn up, were offered before the Application here spoken of was made to the Synod; and before the second Question was voted, as Mr. *Ap-d* here suggests; but contradicts himself again, p. 34. "After the Synod

" had received my final Answer, the Reasons of Protesta-
" tion already inserted, were drawn up in writing, and
" publickly read.

THEN the Synod proceeded to vote the Main Question, *viz.* Whether the Synod shall insist, that Mr. *Ap-d* shall first satisfy them, as to his willingness to subscribe the remaining Articles of the Confession not scrupled by him, before they judge, or approve of his Declarations in relation to the Doctrines scrupled or not?

THE short terms of the Vote were, *Insist* or *Not*: The Roll was called, and it carried *Insist*, by a great Majority, as appears by the Records of the Synod. From whence it is plain, that the Members were still the more convinced, upon a nearer view of the case, that this was the proper and main Business of the Synod, and that the Synod was in the right to insist upon it.

MR. *Ap-d* asserts that the same Number of Ministers, that is twelve, protested also against this Vote, and that one of them had not protested before. But I see no more than three names at this Protestation, in the Records of the Synod. And one of them is there said to have given in his name by proxy. And I will not venture to publish any Gentleman's Name upon Mr. *Ap-d*'s single Testimony, nor indeed any matter of fact unless it be such as make against him. For in such it may be supposed he is not partial. Two Reasons of this Protestation were given, and are these following.

Reas. 1st " BECAUSE from the temper of the Sy-
" nod, and the treatment given to Mr. *Ap-d*, he had no
" Reason to expect that if he had declared his assent to
" the remaining Articles of the *Westminster* Confession,
" against which no Scruples were offered, the Synod
" would have been satisfied with him".

UPON which I would offer the following Remarks, 1st. 'Tis true Mr. *Ap-d* had no great Reason to expect that the Synod would have been satisfied with him, tho' he had subscribed as aforesaid; if he had notwithstanding

ing

ing ſtill adhered to ſuch a ſenſe of his Declarations, as either did not come up to the Doctrines ſcrupled, or contradicted them. And it is not altogether unreaſonable to query, whether this conſideration might not be thought to have determined him againſt ſubſcribing, rather than any temper of the Synod or any treatment he received from them? 2. If there was bad temper in the Synod, and bad treatment given by them, it was not only or moſtly on the ſide of the Queſtion this reaſon is offered againſt: For many living witneſſes can teſtify, that there was abundantly worſe temper appearing in the other ſide, and worſe treatment given by them. 3. There was no ſuch temper in the Majority of the Synod, nor any ſuch treatment given by them to Mr. *Ap-d*, or any man, as could be any juſt reaſon of Proteſtation againſt their vote. 4. The Members of the Synod had a right to determine the Point before them by their own Reaſon, and were under no obligation to proceed upon the Proteſters reaſon, or Mr. *Ap-d*'s. 5. Had Mr. *Ap-d* been able with clearneſs, conſiſtency and freedom to ſubſcribe as deſired, the reſult of the whole affair would, in all probability, have been far different from what the Proteſters and Mr. *Ap-d* ſeem to have expected.

Reaſ. 2d. "BECAUSE Mr. *William Boyd*, who was "ſupported by a ſtrong, that is a numerous Party in the "Synod, alledged that the Reaſons offered by Mr. *Ap-d* "in ſupport of his Scruples, contained more corrupt "Doctrines than the ſcruples themſelves. And when he "was called upon by Mr. *Ap-d*, to point out ſuch cor-"rupt Doctrines, he declined to do it; by which it ap-"peared, that neither he nor any of his Party, had any "Intention to remove his Scruples, in a chriſtian and "reaſonable way; but rather to enflame the Audience "againſt him.

Rem. 1. MR. *Boyd* was no otherwiſe ſupported by any Party in the Synod, than as he ſupported them, *viz.* by Reaſoning and Voting. He ſtood with many others in

the joint Defence, of what he and they agreed in Judgment was the cauſe of Truth and good Order. He gave no juſt ground of offence by mocking or reproaching any man. He did no more than what was the Duty of a Member of the Synod. Why then ſhould Mr. *Boyd* be ſingled out, and ſo much diſpleaſure expreſſed againſt him? *Query*, Would the ſame Gentlemen have conceived as great Indignation againſt Mr. *Boyd*, if he had ſpoke as much, and reaſoned as well on their ſide of the Queſtion? 2. To tell the world *that Mr.* Boyd *was ſupported by a ſtrong, that is, a numerous Party in the Synod*, are too coarſe terms to be given by Chriſtian Miniſters to their Brethren, that deſerve better from them. 'Tis an unjuſt expoſing the Synod to view in an odious and contemptible light: And teaching Mr. *Ap-d* in his falſe and Scurrilous way to term Mr. *Boyd the Prime Manager for the High Party*—Our proteſting Brethren promiſed to give us zealous Reaſons, but inſtead of that they now ſeem to put us off with Railing. This conduct, in ſome of them, was but too publick when it appeared in the Synd; it might have been expected they would not, for their own ſake, have made it more publick in their Appeal to the world. 3. If Mr. *Boyd* ſaid there were corrupt Doctrines in the Reaſons Mr. *Ap-d* advanced to ſupport his Scruples, that was no more than Mr. *Tho. Kennedy* had ſaid in his Paper that was read; and he gave his Reaſons for it in ſaid Paper, which are now in Print to ſpeak for themſelves. But that Mr. *Boyd*, being publickly called upon, and challenged to point out ſuch corrupt Doctrines, declined to do it, was not fact; as Mr. *Ap-d* acknowledges, p. 34, 35. ſaying, "That Mr. *Boyd* hence ſtood "up to make good his charge, but being gently forbid "by his party, ſat down again; becauſe he would not "do it without their order." The Reaſons of this conduct have been already given. By which it may evidently appear, to all perſons free of Prejudice and Partiality, that the method in which the Synod proceeded was

reaſonable

reasonable and Christian; and that the method Mr. *Ap-d* and his Friends took all advantages to introduce was otherwise.

The vote being over, and the Protests entered, Mr. *Ap-d* was called upon by the Moderator, and asked if he was willing now to give the Synod the Satisfaction they had by their last Resolution determined to insist upon requiring from him; by declaring his adherence, or assent to, or subscribing the remaining articles of the *Westminster* Confession, against which he had offered no scruples? Mr. *Ap-d* declined it; and said, "The treatment he had "received from the Synod gave them no reason to expect "it, and he did not think himself obliged to give them "any farther satisfaction than they had already receiv-"ed.

Now by this conduct of Mr. *Ap-d's*, the world seems to be left at liberty, what they shall think of his Sincerity; which was a mighty defence against all suspicions. Whatever he means by it (for it is an equivocal Term) it is something that would permit him to promise, to the Committee, to subscribe the remaining Articles of the Confession not scrupled, and yet refuse to do it, when required by the Synod. If Promising what he never intended to Perform was a stable ground of satisfaction, the Synod had it. And how excessively did he Extol the Merit of that valuable Promise after he had made it! As if the very promising to do a good thing, was sufficient to satisfy all the world, tho' the man that bound himself by this Promise should absolutely refuse to perform it, as often as required, and give a great deal of ill language to those whose duty it was to require him to do it. But Mr. *Ap-d* offers to the publick four reasons for this part of his conduct, a due attention to which will farther enlighten the Case, and shew the world whether he or the Synod was in the wrong. The First he gives in these "words, p. 32. "Tho' I am always ready to satisfy any "disinterested and well disposed Person, who, in a friendly

" friendly manner, asks my opinion of any of the Chriſ-
" tian Doctrines, yet I don't think myſelf obliged to
" gratify the Demands of thoſe, who are ſo attached to
" Party Intereſts and Schemes that they will acquieſce
" in no reaſonable ſatisfaction which a Perſon of *Diffe-*
" *rent Sentiments* can give. And ſuch the Synod ap-
" peared to me."

HERE I am humbly of opinion, Mr. *Ap-d* is turned Advocate for us, and ſays very well for our Juſtification. And to make this evident, I deſire the Readers attention to a few Remarks. 1. Mr. *Ap-d* is always ready to give ſatisfaction as to his opinion concerning any of the Chriſtian Doctrines, but what Doctrines he accounts ſuch we are not told; and it is not to Presbyteries nor Synods that he will give that Satisfaction, but to particular Perſons only; and it is not always nor in all places that perſons can be found qualified as Mr. *Ap-d* requires, in order to his being diſpoſed to ſatisfy them. And ſo this *always ready* of his, tho' it appears very well at firſt view, yet when it is clipt, limited and circumſcribed in this manner, turns at laſt to very little or nothing valuable, and may in practice ſeldom take place. And ſo he differs widely from our Lord Jeſus Chriſt and his Apoſtles on this head, and what all Chriſtians have been ever obliged to by divine Appointment. For our Lord Chriſt Jeſus witneſſed a good Confeſſion before *Pontius Pilate*, 1 *Tim.* vi. 13. As he had done before the *Jewiſh* Sanedrin. He anſwered their Queſtions concerning the Religious Principles he held, tho' he knew they were neither diſintereſted nor well diſpoſed, nor asked in a friendly manner, and that they were attached to Party Intereſts and Schemes, and that they would acquieſce in no reaſonable ſatisfaction, which He, a Perſon of different ſentiments, could give them. The Apoſtles did the ſame in Imitation of their Lord and Maſter, and moſt of them it is likely, ſuffered Martyrdom for ſo doing. And they commanded all Chriſtians to do the ſame, 1 *Pet.* iii. 15. *But ſanctify the Lord God*

God in your hearts, and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear. The Christian's Faith is the ground and reason of his hope, and the Apostle requires all Christians to be ready always to answer every man that inquires into it, tho' not every way qualified as Mr. *Ap-d* requires. Now the General Synod insist that such Candidates as they will admit into their Association, shall be of this Professing Principle; and Mr. *Ap-d* broke with them upon it. And therefore I expect that all who allow our Lord Christ and his Apostles to have been right in this Principle, and correspondent Practice, will justify the conduct of the General Synod.

2. It must be pretty difficult for any one to know, what Mr. *Ap-d* precisely understands by every one of those Qualifications he insists upon, as prerequired in such as he will be pleased to favour with any satisfaction, as to his opinion of the Christian Doctrines. For he has reserved to himself the power of explaining them, as likes him best; and also of judging every person in the world, whether these Qualifications belong to him or not? And accordingly he has put this power in practice, by judging a great Majority of the General Synod, that they are void of them; and are a set of *evil disposed unreasonable persons, attached to Party Interests and Schemes.* And what is all this for, but because they differ from him? And by parity of Reason, he may judge the same way, of all others that differ from him; and brand them with these hard names, and odious characters. By all which it is evident, that Mr. *Ap-d*, by refusing to subscribe upon this ground, has really intercommoned or excommunicated the General Synod, upon the account of their nonconformity to his Religion: And has done it with a great deal of hard names and base characters, thrown upon them to disgrace them. Just as the *Roman Pontiff* excommunicates all the world, that differ from him, and brands them as Hereticks and Schismaticks. But with

this

this Difference that the Procedure of the Biſhop of *Rome* is far more conſiſtent with Equity and Charity, in as much as he excommunicates people for their non-conformity to his avowed, profeſſed, and well known Religion: But Mr. *Ap-d* excommunicates them, for their non-conformity to his concealed, diſſembled and unknown Religion: And one that cannot poſſibly be known by them that ſuffer for their not agreeing to it, unleſs he would be pleas'd to make it known to them; which he is never like to do, if he be juſt to his reaſoning in this place, unleſs he firſt ſhall have ſome ground to think they agree with him in it. Now whether Mr. *Ap-d* or the General Synod are in the wrong, let the impartial world judge.

3. If Mr. *Ap-d* ought to be admitted a member of our Aſſociation, without ſubſcribing ours, or any Confeſſion; and juſt upon the terms here ſpecified; I would ask him or any man, how any other Candidate could, with Juſtice, be excluded, that would give the ſame Satisfaction, and no more, tho he were in Principle an *Arminian*, an *Arian*, a *Socinian*, a *Deiſt*, or a *Pagan*? For if a man of an unknown Religion ought to be admitted, then by the ſame Rule, a man of the worſt Religion cannot be excluded. It is not poſſible to diſtinguiſh between the Religion of this man and t'other man, when they are both equally unknown. And let all thoſe in the chriſtian world that condemn the Synod, lay their hand to their heart, and ſee how they would like it to be put under the miniſtry of ſuch Paſtors? For that is the juſt conſequence of it. That famous Propoſition, *viz. That the Non-ſubſcribing Principles opens a door to let in all Errors and Hereſies into the Church*, is ſo far from being Slander, that it appears to be true to Demonſtration.

4. Mr. *Ap-d* by his Reaſoning upon this head, has in a great meaſure ſaved us the trouble of a long and intricate courſe of Reaſoning to juſtify the Synod's conduct. For he has given it up almoſt in expreſs terms. For

he

he tells us, "That he is a Perſon of DIFFERENT "SENTIMENTS from the General Synod. And "that no Satisfaction that he would think reaſonable "(that is ſafe or convenient for him) to give would be "ſatisfying to them." From whence it is plain to every body, why the Synod and he could not agree in one common Confeſſion? *viz.* Becauſe they are upon different Schemes of Religion. It is reaſonable to receive Mr. *Ap-d*'s account of this Matter as a Juſt one: For no poſſible view or Intereſt could determine him to give this account, if the caſe were not ſo. And Mr. *Ap-d* alone is capable of giving a juſt account of the caſe, for he knows both his own Sentiments and the Synod's. They know their own, but not his till he inform them. Now he tells the world they are Different, but in what Points the Difference conſiſts, and how deep it draws, he has thought fit to conceal, and there is no poſſible way of knowing, unleſs he ſhall be pleaſed to diſcover; beſides, Mr. *Ap-d*'s Practice is agreeable to this Profeſſion, and confirms the truth of it: For ſince they and he are of different Principles, he firſt endeavoured to get their conſtitution altered, that he might be admitted without ſubſcribing their Confeſſion; and when they did not come into this project, then he withdrew his ſubjection to the Synod. Upon the whole I hope the Impartial world will juſtify the Synod for not admitting a man of confeſſedly Different Sentiments in Religion from them, who will not diſcover what thoſe Different Sentiments are. For if they would admit ſuch a Man, they muſt for the ſame Reaſon admit other men upon the ſame Terms, tho' of the moſt falſe and wicked Sentiments.

Reaſ. 2d. "Why ſhould the Synod have diſcovered "ſo much uneaſineſs concerning my ſubſcribing the re-"maining part of the Confeſſion, not ſcrupled? I had "before ſubſcribed without offering any Scruples; and "they knew I muſt again ſubſcribe before Ordination.—

Rem. 1ſt. If loud Clamours and Complaints, and ill-names liberally thrown about, may be thought to diſcover uneaſineſs, then Mr. *Ap-d* was uneaſy, not the Synod. 2. He had before ſubſcribed without offering any Scruples, and that would ſtill have abundantly ſatisfied the Synod, unleſs he had recalled that Subſcription by ſome overt act or acts; ſuch was his publiſhing a ſcurrilous Libel againſt the Confeſſion, which he ſuccumbed in the proof of: And afterwards, Declarations that either did not come up to the Doctrines of the Confeſſion, or contradicted them. And how could their Satisfaction ſtand when its proper foundation was removed? 3. How did the Synod know that he muſt ſubſcribe again before Ordination? What aſſurance had the Synod that he would ſubſcribe in obedience to a Presbytery, who had abſolutely refuſed that favour to a General Synod, conſiſting of many Presbyteries united? 4. Mr. *Ap-d* muſt know that by the ſtanding Rules of Diſcipline and good Order, agreed upon for the defenſe of Religion; the Synod in caſe of Scruples, had reſerved it to themſelves, to receive that Satisfaction.

Reaſ. 3d. "I doubt not but there may be other "ſincere Inquirers after Truth, who have perhaps the "ſame Scruples, which I have againſt ſubſcribing the "Confeſſion. That ſuch men might know, whether "they were to expect any Indulgence, upon making "their Scruples known, it was neceſſary, I ſhould re-"fuſe anſwering the Synod's Queſtion, until they came "to a Final Determination about mine. Becauſe it clear-"ly appeared by their renewing their Judgment, that "if I had firſt told them, I was willing to ſubſcribe the "remaining part of the Confeſſion, they would then "have rejected my Declarations, as unſatisfactory, *with-"out determining any thing concerning the Confeſſion.* But is this the Gentleman, who ranted and ſwaggered in the Synod? As he tells us in p. 13, 14. "I am concerned I "have reaſon to complain of having been baſely miſre-

"preſented,

" preſented, as the Tool of a party; it is a moſt injurious and groundleſs reflection. I would have this Synod know, I ſpeak it not out of contempt of them, I would think it beneath me, to become Tool to any Member of the Synod, any party in it, or the whole Synod taken together; if there be any preſent, who are conſcious of having repreſented me as ſuch, I hope they will condeſcend to give their reaſons for it, (they ſhall be excuſed upon the leaſt appearance of reaſon) otherwiſe let the world look upon ſuch as Defamers. To this no man replyed, tho' there were many preſent who had made ſuch a repreſentation of me, and I could, as I afterwards propoſed, if it was inſiſted upon, have pointed out ſome of them."——

WHERE by the way I would offer this Remark, That here is an Action of Defamation commenced againſt many Members of the Synod, who are not named or pointed out; Mr. *Ap-d* is both Judge and Party, there is not one ſingle evidence, or proof of any Kind produeed to make good the charge; but the accuſed perſons are ſummoned in a very magiſterial way to give up the keys of their conſciences, and to come forth and accuſe themſelves, if guilty, or give reaſons for the report, and upon their Silence and not obeying the Summons, immediately the Judge paſſes a condemnatory Sentence upon them, as defamers; tho' at the ſame time, he tells the world he could have pointed out but ſome of them. And laſtly, this Sentence of defamation, is placed to the account of the General Synod, as their accomplices. A beautiful method of iſſuing Scandal, truly! From all this I conclude, that all Mr. *Ap-d*'s outcry againſt tyranny and oppreſſion, and for the Rights and Liberties of mankind, are but mere grimace, and a pretence to cover ſomething elſe that he thinks not proper to let the world into the knowledge of as yet. It ſeems reaſonable to judge of a Man's Principle by his avowed Practice. And therefore, I fear, if Mr. *Ap-d* had the Power, he would treat

thoſe that differ from him with leſs Juſtice and Impartiality than they have treated him, and that he would forget the golden rule of Equity that he mentions, to do to others as we would that they ſhould do to us. But 2. After all, Mr. *Ap-d* in the 3d Reaſon of his conduct comes in as a Voucher for the explication of the Synod. Here is at leaſt the appearance of reaſon for that ſuſpicion, and ſo Mr. *Ap-d* is bound by his promiſe to excuſe them. Now if the caſe be as he repreſents, whatever reaſon he had for his conduct, the Synod had more to ſtand upon their guard, for his was a Ruling caſe, and if he had been able to make a breach in their conſtitution, he and ſome others were ready to enter by it. 3. He ſays, "If he had told the Synod he was willing to ſubſcribe, "they would then have rejected his Declarations as unſa- "tisfactory, without determining any thing concerning "the Confeſſion." And that it ſeems, would have mar'd the whole deſign. Here is a plain Confeſſion from Mr. *Ap-d*, that the Deſign he was driving, by all the trouble he has given, was to bring the Synod to ſome new Determinations concerning their Confeſſion of Faith, that might render it more agreeable to ſuch as entertain Sentiments in Religious Matters different from it or oppoſite to it. And ſince this is fairly acknowledged as fact, let the Impartial world Judge, whether Mr. *Ap-d* is not the Aggreſſor, and as ſuch chargeable with the conſeſequences? 4. It ſeems to be but Indifferent Morality, that Mr. *Ap-d* guards his conduct by, who will refuſe to do a thing that the Law of God requires him to do, merely becauſe that refuſal was neceſſary to the accompliſhment of a Deſign he had undertaken.

His 4th Reaſon is this. "I was credibly informed, "that inſtead of having any diſpoſition to bring mat- "ters to a Friendly Iſſue, they were reſolved, with- "out giving themſelves the trouble of farther reaſoning "with me, to bring me to a renunciation of all my "ſcruples, that they might have an opportunity of ex-

"poſing

" posing me Effectually in their several Congregations " for discouraging such mighty presumption in young " men for the future, and for adding thereby a new " support to Synodical Authority.

Rem. 1st. THERE was no such resolution passed either in open Synod or the Interloquitor; and so he cannot, with Justice, say the Synod was so resolved. 2. It is hard to say which way they could bring him to a renunciation of all his scruples, without reasoning with him. 3. By the last part of the Synod's conduct, it sufficiently appears that they were far otherwise disposed than as Mr. *Ap-d* here tells the world they were. 4. Mr. *Ap-d* was unjust to the Synod, and unkind to himself, in taking up this false report of the Synod upon so slender evidence; why did he not publish this information in the Synod, in order to receive satisfaction about it? 5. Hereby Mr. *Ap-d* seems to contemn Synodical Authority, in defiance of his Declaration to the contrary, and to think it no presumption in a Candidate that stands for a place among them, to publish a libel upon their principles which he cannot prove to be false.

THE last Scene of Transaction in the Synod relating to to Mr. *Ap-d* was this. In their last Session, after five o'Clock on Friday Evening, June 22d. It was moved, that the Synod should give advice to the Presbytery of *Armagh*, to direct their future conduct towards Mr. *Ap-d*, and let them know whether he should be regarded and continued a Probationer of that Presbytery as formerly. Let us hear Mr. *Ap-d* upon it, p. 36. " When the Synod " could not be prevailed upon to determine any thing " concerning my Scruples; they were asked whether " I should be continued a Probationer in the Presbytery of " *Armagh* as formerly. Herein they acted as they had " done before, they would determine nothing, because " many of their Members were gone away, therefore " they would not take upon them to come to any re- " solution upon an affair which concerned the whole " Church.

" Church. To this it was anſwered, that in number " they ſtill exceeded the Presbytery, to which they were " reſolved to leave that matter, and therefore they muſt " be ſuppoſed more capable to judge, if any ſtreſs is to " be laid upon numbers. But they ſtill declined; for " tho' they appeared full enough of reſentment, they " could not well reject me for Principles concerning " which they would venture to paſs no judgment— " p. 37. By this time I had ſufficiently experienced the " fruits of their Deliberations; and therefore thought " proper to withdraw my Subjection."

Rem. 1ſt. By the clauſe as formerly, I take to be meant having right to ordination, upon his ſatisfying the Presbytery, as before he offered Scruples againſt ſubſcribing the Confeſſion. 2. To the aforeſaid queſtion propoſed to the Synod, ſome anſwered by ſaying, " What " have we any more to do with him, ſince he has not " ſatisfied the Synod?" Others overtured that he ſhould be refer'd to the Presbytery of *Armagh*, that had licenſed him, and that they ſhould be directed to conduct themſelves towards him according to our known rules. A third diviſion were, For anſwering the Queſtion by an Act now to be made. But when neither of theſe propoſals gave Univerſal Satisfaction, there aroſe a warm debate; in which the Members that ſpoke generally eſpouſed the ſide of the Overture, or the new Act. 3. If the Synod determined nothing, Mr. *Ap-d* was much in the wrong, to fill the world with noiſy complaints for nothing. 4. If the Synod could not be prevailed upon to determine any thing concerning his Scruples (I ſuppoſe he means his Declarations) he had none to blame but himſelf for it; for he would not clear their way by reducing them to a determinate Senſe, and it was not proper to enter upon the conſideration of them otherwiſe. And that they did not proceed to conſider his Declarations, after he had abſolutely refuſed to ſubſcribe the remaining Articles of the Confeſſion, was intirely owing

to

to their lenity and forbearance towards Mr. *Ap-d*, for in that caſe they muſt have condemned them and the native conſequence of that was their taking his Licence from him. 5. I ask, Had the Synod come to no determination in Mr. *Ap-d*'s caſe? Yes they had: For they had reſolved to inſiſt that Mr. *Ap-d* ſhould ſubſcribe, in the firſt place, to clear their way to farther proceedings. Was that nothing? It was nothing to him, it could not any way ſerve his ends. Does he not tell us, they were reſolved to leave that Matter to the Presbytery? Was not that a Reſolution? It was overtur'd and reaſon'd for, and juſt ready for the vote, when Mr. *Ap-d* withdrew his ſubjection. This alſo was nothing in Mr. *Ap-d*'s Eyes, becauſe he could make no advantage of it; yet it ſeems to be one of the fruits of their Deliberations that did not reliſh with him. Tho' I am intirely of opinion, that it ought in reaſon, to have gone down with a better *guſt*: For it was of a Friendly, and healing Nature, with reſpect to Mr. *Ap-d*, and ſafe for the Synod. It made no alteration in their Eſtabliſh'd Order, nor any other alteration in his Caſe, but that the Presbytery would not have proceeded to his Ordination, till the General Synod had received Satisfaction from him, as to his ſoundneſs in the Faith, and given an order for it. And yet the beſt return Mr. *Ap-d* had to make the Synod for this their Friendly deſign, was to repreſent them falſly and maliciouſly as full of reſentment againſt him, but not able to cenſure him, they were ſo embarraſſed in their meaſures. It muſt be a very ungenerous and curriſh temper in a man to ſnap another by the hand with his teeth, that is reaching him a piece of bread. 6. But however friendly and healing the tendency of this Overture was, yet it was oppoſed with vigour, and a new Act urged in oppoſition to it, by thoſe on one ſide of the Queſtion. But it was defended with equal Reſolution by the other Side. It was pleaded in favour of it, that becauſe many of their Members

were

were gone away, therefore they would not come to any new reſolution upon the terms of admitting Intrants, an affair that concerns the whole Body. To this it was anſwered, that in number they ſtill exceeded the Presbytery, to which they were reſolved to leave that matter. The Reply to this was obvious, That the Presbytery had the known Rules of order ſettled by the general Synod to regulate their conduct, and that their acting could not affect the whole Church, as thoſe of a Synod would do, notwithſtanding the ſmallneſs of their number, and conſequently, that ſaid overture was the only ſafe Step that could be taken in the preſent circumſtances. But on the other ſide it was pleaded, that the act of reference (as it is commonly called) paſſed in 1725, againſt a good deal of oppoſition, when almoſt two thirds, of the Members were gone away. The ſmallneſs of their number did not diſcourage thoſe preſent to make an act that affects all the Miniſters and Candidates in the General Synod, and lays them in caſe of default, under the Rigorous Penalties of Suſpenſion and Depoſition. The Reply to this was, that the force of this argument lies on the other ſide of the Queſtion; If a ſmall number then made an Act to ſecure the juſt Rights of their Abſent Brethren, it does not from hence follow, that a ſmaller Number can at another time, make an act to give them up. Then Mr. *Ap-d* roſe up and ſaid, "Moderator, I perceive that this Judicature is not like to come "to a Deciſion of this matter, therefore I am reſolved "to decide it myſelf; and with that view I think pro"per to withdraw my ſubjection to this Synod. And that ſpeech of his quickly put an end to the Debate. For the Truth of this account, I appeal to the Records of the Synod, and Mr. *Ap-d*'s Narrative, both which I have before me in writing it, and to the Teſtimony of numerous Impartial Spectators, who were preſent. Now from the whole, it appears, that Mr. *Ap-d* after all the Trouble he gave to the Synod, turned out a NON-SUB-

SCRIBER,